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# Furman

FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2012

Community Outreach:  
Reviving the Poinsett  
Corridor PAGE 22



Furman

FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2012  
Volume 55, Number 1

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EDITOR	Jim Stewart
DESIGNER	Roxanne Chase
CONTRIBUTORS	Stacy Schorr Chandler Kyle Longest Allen Mendenhall Vince Moore John Roberts Leigh Gauthier Savage Tom Triplitt Ron Wagner
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT/ CLASS NOTES EDITOR	Nell Smith
EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE	Tish Pearman Anderson Randall David Cook Nancy Fullbright Sam Hodges
PRINTING	Hickory Printing Solutions
E-MAIL	jim.stewart@furman.edu
TELEPHONE	864.294.2185
FAX	864.294.3023



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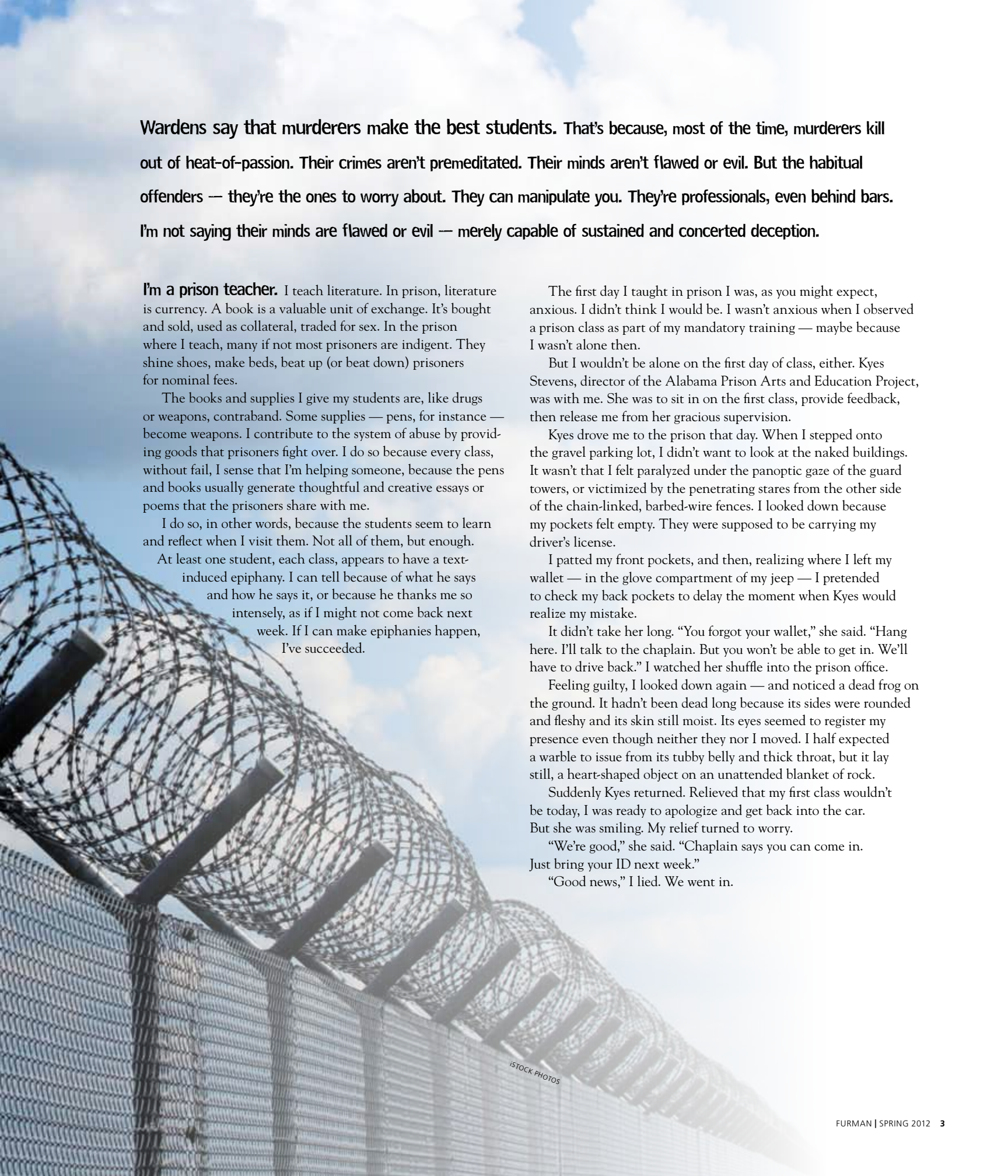




# BENEATH THE GUARD TOWER

By Allen Mendenhall





Wardens say that murderers make the best students. That's because, most of the time, murderers kill out of heat-of-passion. Their crimes aren't premeditated. Their minds aren't flawed or evil. But the habitual offenders — they're the ones to worry about. They can manipulate you. They're professionals, even behind bars. I'm not saying their minds are flawed or evil — merely capable of sustained and concerted deception.

**I'm a prison teacher.** I teach literature. In prison, literature is currency. A book is a valuable unit of exchange. It's bought and sold, used as collateral, traded for sex. In the prison where I teach, many if not most prisoners are indigent. They shine shoes, make beds, beat up (or beat down) prisoners for nominal fees.

The books and supplies I give my students are, like drugs or weapons, contraband. Some supplies — pens, for instance — become weapons. I contribute to the system of abuse by providing goods that prisoners fight over. I do so because every class, without fail, I sense that I'm helping someone, because the pens and books usually generate thoughtful and creative essays or poems that the prisoners share with me.

I do so, in other words, because the students seem to learn and reflect when I visit them. Not all of them, but enough.

At least one student, each class, appears to have a text-induced epiphany. I can tell because of what he says and how he says it, or because he thanks me so intensely, as if I might not come back next week. If I can make epiphanies happen, I've succeeded.

The first day I taught in prison I was, as you might expect, anxious. I didn't think I would be. I wasn't anxious when I observed a prison class as part of my mandatory training — maybe because I wasn't alone then.

But I wouldn't be alone on the first day of class, either. Kyes Stevens, director of the Alabama Prison Arts and Education Project, was with me. She was to sit in on the first class, provide feedback, then release me from her gracious supervision.

Kyes drove me to the prison that day. When I stepped onto the gravel parking lot, I didn't want to look at the naked buildings. It wasn't that I felt paralyzed under the panoptic gaze of the guard towers, or victimized by the penetrating stares from the other side of the chain-linked, barbed-wire fences. I looked down because my pockets felt empty. They were supposed to be carrying my driver's license.

I patted my front pockets, and then, realizing where I left my wallet — in the glove compartment of my jeep — I pretended to check my back pockets to delay the moment when Kyes would realize my mistake.

It didn't take her long. "You forgot your wallet," she said. "Hang here. I'll talk to the chaplain. But you won't be able to get in. We'll have to drive back." I watched her shuffle into the prison office.

Feeling guilty, I looked down again — and noticed a dead frog on the ground. It hadn't been dead long because its sides were rounded and fleshy and its skin still moist. Its eyes seemed to register my presence even though neither they nor I moved. I half expected a warble to issue from its tubby belly and thick throat, but it lay still, a heart-shaped object on an unattended blanket of rock.

Suddenly Kyes returned. Relieved that my first class wouldn't be today, I was ready to apologize and get back into the car. But she was smiling. My relief turned to worry.

"We're good," she said. "Chaplain says you can come in. Just bring your ID next week."

"Good news," I lied. We went in.





KAY HINTON

*The author, a 2005 graduate, is a writer, lawyer, English instructor, and currently a Ph.D. student at Auburn University. Visit [www.allenmendenhall.com](http://www.allenmendenhall.com).*

**What it meant to be inside, and how the inside was different from the outside, was something I never quite figured out, no matter how many notes I took or how many hours of reflection I went through during my drive home.**

**I got patted down,** and the guard (officer; we're supposed to call the guards "officers") made a passing remark about a cavity search, perhaps to ease the tension.

Another officer shepherded us into the chapel where we were to wait until the prisoners emerged from lock-down. For some reason, three or four prisoners were with us. One of them, a heavy-set blonde who couldn't have been more than 18 — but who must have been more than 18 to be in there — asked me a series of questions, first about Republicans, then about the Middle East. He said he'd been in prison for two days. He said, "This place is scary as hell," and that he'd been hiding in the chapel as long as he could. Being new myself, I felt for him.

Lock-down is a form of punishment. It hap-

pens when prisoners are caught fighting, stealing, mouthing off, smoking dope. I'm not sure why the prisoners were on lock-down that day, but I soon learned that lock-down was more normal than exceptional — at least on Thursdays around one o'clock, when I was supposed to teach.

Eventually an officer materialized and ushered Kyes and me into a classroom full of prisoners (students; we're supposed to call them "students").

Apparently the course title, "Comedy and Literature," drew a large crowd, but the expectant looks on several faces quickly gave way to disappointment because, I think, I was not what the students had hoped for: a young female graduate student. Worse, I wasn't funny, and the class was about comedy.

## I tried to explain what I meant by comedy

as a genre, and a few students gave their neighbors looks that seemed to mean, “This is not what I signed up for.”

The heavy-set young blonde from the chapel seemed to want to show off. He raised his hand and asked if I’d read this or that, then declared that he’d read everything on the syllabus. I knew something wasn’t right when a few students exchanged knowing glances. But I let the moment pass without comment.

Because of the lock-down, the first class was abbreviated. I felt as though I finished as soon as I began. Several students lined up to introduce themselves. One asked if I could bring him contact information for a screenwriting company because, he said, he was a professional screenwriter. Another told me about his published poetry and asked whether I wanted to see it. I reservedly said yes. (I never saw his poetry.) Another felt the need to tell me that he was innocent and didn’t belong “with these guys.” Three or four others simply said, “Thank you.”

Thirty-three students came that day. Eleven remained on the last day of class. I never saw the heavy-set blonde again. Kyes said she knew I wouldn’t, that after his performance he would “get set straight.” That’s code for getting the hell kicked out of you.

**My syllabus** discussed comedy as literature, and also the role of comedy in literature. Comedy can mean many things; humor is only one aspect of the genre. My goal was for the students to learn about various expressions of comedy and how authors use comedy to comment on ethics or morality.

A course on comedy was not just for escape and relief, the syllabus explained, but for critical self-exploration. I hoped the students would develop a greater awareness of the relation of comedy to the human condition — one of those hopes that’s contrary to intuition and that humanities professors recite to justify their work. The human condition, I’m afraid, has become a tired defense for any enterprise that doesn’t generate, or rarely generates, financial profit.

Anyway, what was the human condition in here?

This was a place where human existence was supervised and controlled, guarded and

mediated. It was cut off from the “outside” world and relegated to a strange, constant “inside.” What it meant to be inside, and how the inside was different from the outside, was something I never quite figured out, no matter how many notes I took or how many hours of reflection I went through during my drive home. I live in Atlanta. The prison is west of Montgomery, so my drives home were long.

If anything, I learned that the human condition isn’t the same from time to time or place to place, and that what it means to be human, in a space where humanity isn’t completely acknowledged, feels different from anything I knew. I was merely a temporary visitor with freedom of entry and exit. I wanted to be inside where “they” lived, to see the place that “they” couldn’t leave, to satisfy my own curiosities — even as I wanted to help them learn to better themselves.

I sometimes wonder whether the prisoners’ bored lives were a perverse source of pleasure for me. I appreciated my life, and the decisions I had made, more and more each class. For every good motive there is an ulterior one, and sometimes motives are sublimated. And even if I did good things by teaching in prison, even if my motives were, for lack of a better word, pure, I feel, in some ways, guilty for the smugness that I assumed when I left — and that I tried, unsuccessfully, to fight off. During the drives to and from prison, I asked myself why teaching there made me feel good about myself. Was it because I was doing something for others, or for me? Did it matter? What was the difference?

**One day** I distributed copies of J. M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, most of which I never saw again. I expected that. The book opens with sex, and sex recurs throughout. Sex, in a place where it’s forbidden, where it’s either coerced or a last resort, is a luxury worth hiding and fighting for. It’s in high demand and short supply. It’s the thing prisoners miss most. I’m not sure what happened to those books, but I’m sure they were put to use, sold, fought over.

I don’t give extra supplies. I provide students with what they need and nothing more, because if they get more, they’ll harm others and themselves. And if that happens, the guards — officers — will begin to see the teachers

as a problem. And if the teachers become problems, they disappear. Quickly.

I didn’t want to disappear.

Murderers make the best students. They didn’t want me to disappear, either.

**Most university students** take my course because literature is a requirement, a hurdle over which they must jump if they want to graduate. To get them to read, I threaten them with pop quizzes or bribe them with bonus points. I tell them I’m grading them. Most of them hate literature. They think they know what’s important to learn, and it isn’t poetry or philosophy or Great Books. They view literature as something like punishment.

But the prisoners, the people whose lives have become punishment, are willing to circulate petitions to have more literature classes and to stake their reputations on literature, which is, in a space of perpetual confinement, the opposite of punishment — the closest thing to sex that isn’t sex itself.

My university students complete their writing assignments because they are mandatory and graded. I don’t give my prison students writing assignments, but every week the prisoners give me a stack of essays they’ve written. They like writing, and reading. And they like Shakespeare. And they like me.

Why, I ask again, does teaching in prison make me feel good about myself? Is it because I’m doing something for others, or for me? Does it matter? What’s the difference?

**I’m a creature of habit.** I establish routines and stick to them. Each week on my way to the prison I stopped at Dairy Queen, an indulgence that struck me as inappropriate after one of my students told me that a visiting relative had brought him a Burger King hamburger — the first hamburger he’d eaten since being admitted 15 years ago.

Every week that first semester I arrived at the same time, parked in the same spot. Every week I looked down at the frog corpse, which nobody had touched. It decayed a little more each time I studied it. It was like a piece of garbage that no one would throw away. I had a hard time imagining it ever lived.



I thought about the student whose poetry I had agreed to read but never actually read. That student quit coming to class. I thought I must have offended or disappointed him because of my own fear and false sense of superiority. I tried to justify my arrogant behavior on the grounds that I was still here in prison, still doing something decent and right, still helping prisoners to learn. But putting yourself into a situation to do good is not the same as doing good.

One week I wasn't allowed inside. I waited for two hours in the front office before giving up and going home. The next week, I learned there had been a stabbing. Apparently, two prisoners got in a fight, one stabbed the other, the wounded one ducked into a dorm so his pals could stitch him up, and the guards walked in as the stitching was taking place. The prison went on lock-down.

When I saw my students the next week, they apologized. But it wasn't their fault. To my knowledge, no one in the class was involved in the fight. Nevertheless, I let them apologize because I was afraid of what they would say or do if I yielded authority. I couldn't let them know that they were in control.

Moments like this made me wonder what these men were like when I wasn't around. They couldn't be this polite and enthusiastic around other prisoners, could they? Were they special prisoners, the ones whose love for literature had cultivated moral sensitivity?

Perhaps it was a performance. The only people who didn't seem to perform in prison were the guards (officers). We didn't trust each other. To them, I was probably a bleeding heart liberal who thought he could change a bunch of hardened criminals. To me, they were a mob of jocks who made a display of their callousness and cruelty, saying things like, "Our job would be easier if we could kill them all off," or "Which dude are you gonna set straight today?" Never mind that the officers were victims of desensitization and may not have played sports at all. Perspective is a funny thing.

I'm sure the officers were fine men individually, but when they were together they traded crude jokes, mocked the prisoners, and laughed uproariously at either my or the prisoners' expense. One day an officer taunted me with questions about my "comfy" life in the "ivory tower," and about the pointlessness of literature.

I sat there, silent, taking it all in, because I didn't know what else to do, and because, to a certain extent, I was used to it, what with my university students being so disdainful of literature. I even agreed with the officer on some points. I have reservations about the utility of literature, and I have a save-the-world-on-your-own-time mentality in the classroom.

The only bad thing that happened to me in prison was that a guard stole my leather keychain, which my sister had given me as a Christmas present. I wasn't upset because I lost the keychain. It was the principle of the matter. Taxpayers were supporting the officers to protect people like me, but the officers were stealing from me — doing what some prisoners had done to get here in the first place. This wasn't right, but it was routine. And routine is order.

**The students** were clearly disappointed about missing class because of the stabbing. They wanted to talk. They wanted new reading assignments.

Two weeks after the stabbing, they came to me with a proposal. Would I, they asked, take their petition supporting more prison classes and give it to Kyes?

They explained that the only opportunity for intellectual fulfillment was during my class. No other classes were offered, and the students wanted to read more than I could provide. One wanted to learn French, another to study Western political philosophy, still another to translate something from Latin to English. They wanted me to see if Kyes could establish something like a school in prison.

Although I nodded enthusiastically, I realized that they were growing delusional the more they talked about what they wanted, that they were fantasizing about a knowledge exchange that could never happen.

They wanted school to come to them. Most of my university students wanted out of school. What made my prison students different? Was it time or banality? Was it that they had nothing else to do?

Perhaps. But when I think about the sincerity and intensity with which they approached literature, I shudder to think that my university students aren't as willing or appreciative. Then again, my university students, for all their snarky and selfish attitudes, weren't criminals or murderers. And I suppose that not all prison students were in my class for the "right" reasons. Some wanted to mix up the routine, I'm sure, and some wanted to avoid the violence and futility of prison life. My course gave them focus and meaning. If only my university students could realize this potential in texts.

**I taught** *Waiting for Godot* in my prison class. Afterward a balding white man, in prison for cocaine, pulled me aside and said, "Hey, man, I know this is a comedy course and all, but that play was a little too real for the guys in here — because we actually know what it is to wait for Godot."

And here I thought the play was absurd.

It all comes down to futility. If my class provided focus and meaning, what did it mean that I taught a text on meaninglessness? That's a vulgar reading of the play, but try finding meaning in meaninglessness when you're behind bars.

It's easy to forget where you are when you teach in prison. The classroom itself is separate from the quotidian realities of prison life. It's an artificial space. The prisoners attend my class to escape, but the classroom is, architecturally and geographically, right in the middle of the prison. No place besides my class is more central — physically, functionally and metaphorically —

because without my class prisoners would feel confined beyond their tolerance level.

No matter how much I want my classes to be about intellectual fulfillment, self-improvement or aesthetic appreciation, they always serve another function: to keep prisoners from thinking about their confinement. If my class is escapist, what it escapes is not physical reality but habits of thinking. Is it problematic that my class both enables and perpetuates psychological torment at the same time that it provides temporary relief? If my class helps the system run, and run well, isn't it strange that the class is putatively about escape from the system?

Routine is order.

**When I pulled my jeep** into the parking lot for the last day of my first semester, something felt strange. At first I couldn't figure out what. Then I realized that the lot had been paved. No more gravel. The ground was smooth and black and hot.

It was May now, and May in Alabama is like July in other states. You could see steam rising from the asphalt. I looked down where the frog was supposed to be. It wasn't there. For 14 weeks it had been there, undisturbed. Now it was gone.

As I waited to be admitted, I thought back on the semester and all my victories and failures. I thought about one student who'd succeeded in getting his crossword puzzle accepted for publication in *The Los Angeles Times*, and about another whose short story had been published in a prominent literary magazine. Then I thought about the student whose poetry I had agreed to read but never actually read. That student quit coming to class. I thought I must have offended or disappointed him because of my own fear and false sense of superiority. I tried, sitting there, to justify my arrogant behavior on the grounds that I was still here in prison, still doing something

decent and right, still helping prisoners to learn. But putting yourself into a situation to do good is not the same as doing good.

We watched a film during the last class. I distributed certificates of completion, and after the film I gave my obligatory departure speech. Prison teachers are shuffled from facility to facility to avoid longstanding relationships with students. I knew I wouldn't be back in this prison and that I'd never see these students again, unless they got out one day and thought to look me up. I hadn't planned a speech. I never plan speeches.

"In the outside world," I said, "people don't watch as much news or read as many books as you do. I can't get my freshmen to read anything unless I give them pop quizzes. They complain when I assign something longer than four pages. And I teach at a nationally recognized institution." The speech was degenerating into something about me, not about them, but they didn't seem to mind. I think they understood that, all along, the class, for me, had been partially about me, even as it was about them, too.

The students listened intently as I told them how my university freshmen had bragged about

not reading and had told me, more than once, that they thought poetry was pointless and that literature wasn't worth studying.

I couldn't tell if the prisoners were shocked or mad or sad. Maybe they were pained to learn that the outside world might not care about what they were doing in my classroom. Maybe they resented that others looked down on a thing — literature — that they had come to practice and love. Maybe they couldn't understand why anyone on the outside would neglect something so precious as knowledge or literature.

Or maybe they could understand, and that's what hurt the most: knowing they'd lost the freedom not to care. [F]

*This article appeared in its original form in the Birmingham Arts Journal.*



KAY HINTON





*Josh Treviño '97 knows politics — and is frequently asked to represent the conservative viewpoint on talk shows and other fare. Photo by Kenny Braun.*

# THE QUOTE MACHINES

ARE PUNDITS — THOSE TALKING HEADS YOU SEE ON  
CABLE NEWS PROGRAMS — ENTERTAINERS OR INFORMERS?  
ACCORDING TO TWO ALUMNI, THEY'RE BOTH.

Settled into your couch, you don't have to flip channels long before you see it: the television screen divided into little boxes, each filled with a talking head. Sometimes it's a shouting head, locked in heated battle with another shouting head, wagging fingers, citing polls, casting blame, and performing something awfully close to black magic with statistics seemingly spun from thin air.

What you've found is a pundit, or a pack of them, and it seems they're the main attraction more often than not in today's cable news programming. Who are these people? And why should we believe anything they shout at us?

One of them (don't worry, he's not a shouter) is Josh Treviño '97, vice president for communications at the Texas Public Policy Foundation. He knows politics, and he was first invited to share his wisdom a few years ago by Al Jazeera English, the Arabic television news network. "I was in demand because I was a conservative willing to appear on Al Jazeera English," he says. "There weren't a ton of those."

In 2010, MSNBC came calling. Treviño became a semi-regular on a show hosted by Cenk Uygur, then by Al Sharpton.

Treviño had no illusions about what he was in for at left-leaning MSNBC. "People are brought on these shows to fulfill specific roles," he says. "I'm a stand-in for conservative, Republican, Texan, all the things that the MSNBC viewing audience just hates and despises. And so oftentimes I am called upon to answer for the perceived sins of everybody on the right."

"It's not fair, but it's how it is. If you are a leftist on a right-leaning channel, like Fox News, I suspect you tend to be treated much the same way."

He's been shouted at, interrupted, even called "a great distorter" and "the rearranger of words" by Sharpton, all on live television. "It can be a bit abusive," Treviño admits, but adds, "There's certainly no sympathy asked."

That's because it's all part of the game. "There is kind of a market imperative, if not to make the news into entertainment, at least to make the news entertaining," he says. "So you can't hold it against the producers for doing their best to elicit that."

They do so by hiring fiery hosts. A big name like Sharpton is certain to evoke a response before he even opens his mouth. Other hosts, like Fox News' Bill O'Reilly and Sean Hannity, HLN's Nancy Grace, and MSNBC's Rachel Maddow, snag high ratings for the same reason.

But guests on these shows are expected to perform as well.

"The producers are frequently speaking into your ear and urging you to do things," Treviño says. "One thing that's been interesting to me is the extent to which the news programs are really staged as what I'll describe as kind of entertainment-type reality television. It's not uncommon to be on a show and somebody makes a comment — either an attack or a cut or some sort of a tendentious statement — and you'll hear the producer in your ear saying, 'That's it! That's your opening. Go, go, get him, get him!'"

"I've had producers appear in my ear and urge me to interrupt another guest," says Treviño, whose appearances on MSNBC are beamed from a studio near his home in Austin, Texas. "Sometimes I heed them, and sometimes I don't, but it happens."



**PUNDITS ARE MOST OFTEN** brought in to talk politics, especially in an election year, but they're deployed to help us understand everything from entertainment news to foreign relations, business dealings and legal affairs.

That's your cue, Ann Fitz.

Fitz, a 1999 Furman graduate who lives in Atlanta, started her law career as a prosecutor before switching to criminal defense. So she knows the ins and outs of both sides of the courtroom, which, paired with her knack for explaining complicated court cases in simple terms, makes her a sought-after guest on shows that delve into American justice.

Her debut came in 2006, when an Atlanta news station interviewed her about her constitutional challenge to a state sex offender law. Fox News called the next day, and her appearance there turned into a regular gig. She's since appeared on CNN and HLN shows, including "Nancy Grace," and she's a frequent guest on truTV's "In Session."

While shows that focus on legal issues can get every bit as heated as politically themed shows, Fitz's tone is calm and measured. She says the producers she's worked with are OK with that.

"Every person has a different personality and a different technique," she says. "When they see you on air on one show, and producers from another show call you, you're being booked for your own personality."

But that doesn't mean you don't get some guidance on how things should go when the cameras are rolling. "You're not told what you have to say," Fitz says. "You're just told what hat you have to wear."

On "Nancy Grace," for example, Fitz says the producers told her, "Nancy is the prosecutor, and she likes it when you are the defense attorney, and she doesn't want you to be the prosecutor and agree with her, so you've got to take the defense side."

So sure, there's a bit of string-pulling behind the talking heads. But Treviño and Fitz say they believe there's plenty of substance amid the shouting. Primarily, of course, there's the subject-specific expertise that most of us regular Joes watching at home simply don't have.

"The hosts are great at what they do," Fitz says, "but I am regularly in the courtroom. I'm working with clients, and I know what really happens out in the field. So I think I bring that perspective of, 'This is how this type of case actually works.'"

Treviño readily admits that as an employee of an organization that engages in conservative-policy activism, he goes on television with an agenda. But he believes there's value in hearing the ideas he puts forth, both for viewers who agree with him and for those who think he's full of it.

"What is supposed to come out is some kind of an exchange of ideas or points of view — or, in my case, an opportunity to advance a particular idea or viewpoint that otherwise might not receive a hearing," he says.

But he emphasizes the danger inherent in a simple fact of human nature: We tend to be open only to views that match our own. For television shows, that means there are almighty ratings to be had by sticking to one opinion and shouting down the rest.

"There are two types of cable news shows: those that seek to educate and engage, which I will charitably say is a lot of them, [and] those that exist simply to affirm. People love — and I'm not immune to this — watching TV, reading books, reading magazines that help fill in their prejudices. It's just a very human thing."

But, he adds, "Everybody owes it to themselves to have their views challenged a bit."

**NO ONE, HOWEVER,** is claiming that watching these shows is the equivalent of eating your broccoli. There's plenty of candy to go around.

"One of the things I'm always acutely conscious of, especially if it's an explicitly combative show like the Sharpton show, is that you're essentially in the rhetorical equivalent of a schoolyard argument in front of the entire country, or at least in front of the entire viewing audience," Treviño says.

And who doesn't like a good fight at the flagpole, especially if you're not the one getting punched?

But turning serious matters like politics or the legal system into entertainment is hardly a new phenomenon. "Back before television," Fitz says, "people used to go to courtrooms and watch trials as entertainment. There's always been a fascination with criminal cases. I think part of it is understanding why people do the things they do and how one person becomes a criminal, while the people that are watching do not cross that line."

And just as too much candy can cause teeth to decay, there's a line past which getting whipped up about a political argument or a court case can cause trouble.

"You have a lot of people that get very impassioned and emotional about cases and people that they really don't understand, but they're hearing the sensationalized aspects of the cases that play on the emotions of the public," Fitz says.

Take Casey Anthony, the Florida woman tried last summer in the death of her 2-year-old daughter, Caylee. Anthony was acquitted by jurors — but convicted and hung in the court of public opinion.

"Whether you like her or hate her, she's in fear of her life. She will never have a normal life again," Fitz says. "To have even the scintilla of an idea of someone taking justice into their own hands because they have been so emotionally toyed with by the media coverage of a case like that to me is a very scary thing."

Here's another scary thing: Despite their pedigrees — the advanced degrees, the fancy titles, the years of experience working in the trenches of whatever it is they're talking about — these pundits, taken together, aren't much better at making predictions than the rest of us. Sure, they regale us with tales of the past, and they're great at using polls to tell us what's going on this very minute, but forecasting the future? It's not a strong point.

Psychologist Philip E. Tetlock spent nearly two decades recording predictions from 284 pundit-types — people who made a living doing commentary on political and economic trends — and comparing them with what actually occurred. The results, taken in aggregate, found that the pundits' predictions were roughly on par with, as Tetlock put it, a dart-throwing chimpanzee.



*Ann Fitz '99 is sought after for her ability to explain legal complexities. Photo by Kay Hinton.*

**SO WHAT'S THEIR REAL POWER?** Danielle Vinson, chair of the political science department at Furman, says it lies in setting the agenda. The topics of conversation at the department's twice monthly "Pizza and Politics" discussions with students and faculty, for example, often mirror the hot topics in the media, she says.

"We're clearly being driven by what we're seeing on television," Vinson says. "Candidates are always being asked to respond to what these pundits said or how this person reacted to this issue or that event on television. And so I think it does have a tremendous impact on what issues we focus on, and what events we focus on."

But while public discourse may echo what we see and hear on television, the polls so often cited by pundits don't always reflect reality, Vinson cautions. In fact, she says, polls tend to reflect what's being said by — guess who? — pundits.

"The polls tend to mirror what's going on, particularly among political elites, because people are listening for cues from people that they trust," she says. "So if they're hearing either pundits or politicians saying, 'The economy's a disaster and this is the reason why and we're going to blame this side or we're going to blame that side,' they tend to reflect it."

In their defense, pundits can, in theory and in fact, do a lot of good. People like Fitz shed light on the law and help us understand the significance of court cases in the news. People like Treviño talk about political ideology without being kept on a leash (or shoved into the spotlight) by a particular candidate. Others keep us up to speed on complex issues like economics or foreign policy that we know are important but are hard to understand.

The trick is in sorting out which talking heads to trust, and which ones are just spewing sound and fury, signifying nothing.

"Nobody gets on TV out of the blue," Treviño says. "Be aware of that."

So maybe today's talking head is there because he has experience in what he's talking about — or maybe she just has a style that appeals to producers. After all, says Richard Letteri, a Furman communication studies professor, "They want kind of a certain personality: mean, tough, ready to yell. But at the same time they know what you're going to say before you get on there. They know who's going to make sparks fly and who's going to be too calm and tepid for them."

Beware, though, of a know-it-all — something Letteri says he sees plenty of on television news shows. "You have the same guy speaking on a plurality of issues — anything that comes up, from politics to economic policy to domestic policy to foreign affairs to global policy to wars and the military," he says. "These guys can only know so much, right?"

"They get briefed on something, they read some newspapers, and then they get to expound on everything. They don't have the background, they're not intricately involved in one or the other of these kinds of issues that are at hand. . . . They're allowed to speak and be considered experts on all these issues when they're not. And that's something that people should really kind of recognize and understand."

Ultimately, then, it's up to viewers to judge whether a talking head is worth a listen. And the best tool with which to make that judgment is some expertise of your own.

Get your news from multiple sources, Letteri advises, and "look at them from multiple perspectives."

After all, as Treviño says, "You can't tell a good pundit from a bad pundit unless you're well-informed to begin with." [F]

*The author, a 1999 graduate, is a freelance journalist in Raleigh, N.C.*



# Finding Faith

By Kyle Longest

How much do today's young people value religion? What is their view of God? The author, who has taught sociology at Furman since 2009, is part of a research team involved in the National Study of Youth and Religion. Under the primary direction of Christian Smith of the University of Notre Dame, the ongoing project is following more than 2,500 adolescents from their teenage years into their early 20s. By surveying these young people at different stages of their lives, the researchers are developing a comprehensive picture of how adolescents manage and interpret religion, and how this process changes as they make the transition into young adulthood.

## The National Study of Youth and Religion

was motivated, in part, as a way to address several misperceptions about adolescents as propagated by popular media and news outlets. One of the most common misperceptions is that adolescents are no longer religious, and that their participation in religious activities and devotion to faith are dramatically dropping compared to generations past.

Yet that is not what our research shows. In fact, more than 80 percent of adolescents, defined in our study as 13- to 17-year-olds, say that religion is at least somewhat important in their lives, and more than 80 percent go to church at least a few times per year. More than 60 percent go many times a year, and more than 50 percent say they attend services at least once a month. Similarly, 65 percent claim to have read scripture in the last year and more than 85 percent pray, with 50 percent praying at least once a week. These numbers are comparable to the behavior we see among adults.

In fact, when we tried to find “not religious” adolescents — those who never attend worship services, don't think religion is important to their daily lives or don't identify with any religion — the number was only about 10 percent.

So in many ways adolescents are similar to adults in how they participate in religion. But they are far less similar in how they think about or define religion.

**Adolescents tend** not to emphasize specific doctrines, traditions or even beliefs when they discuss their personal understanding of religion. As one Mormon teen said when asked what religion is: “I believe in, well, my whole religion is where you try to be good and, if you're not good, then you should just try to get better. That's all.” We heard similar definitions throughout our interviews.

For teens today, religion boils down to trying to be good. If you're not being good, you try to get better. As one Protestant teen said, “[Religion] just makes me a nicer person, 'cause before I hated adults but now it's a lot easier just to be, like, lovable and caring to people.” Again, we did not hear much about specific rules for behavior, traditions to follow, or how to believe.

When we examined all the responses, we started to see a *de facto*, interdenominational tradition developing. Christian Smith calls it “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.” This is not something adolescents say they adhere to, but when we look across their responses, we see several common themes that, in a way, form a type of doctrine.



The belief system consists of four main parts. First, there is a God, or higher power, that created and watches over the world. Second, God wants people to be good and nice, which forms the primary (if not only) religious “requirement” adolescents perceive. Third, the central goal in life is to be happy, and as long as we are being good and nice and not interfering with others’ happiness, we have satisfied the goals of religion. Finally, teens see God becoming involved in their lives only when needed — primarily when they want to be happier. In the end, God is there to help people reach the ultimate goal of being happy.

One Protestant teen summarizes this set of beliefs when she says, “God’s all around you, all the time. He believes in forgiving people and what-not, and he’s there to guide us, for someone to talk to and help us through our problems. Of course, he doesn’t talk back.” Teens believe they can come to that higher power when they need it and receive help with their problems — mainly with being happier.

As Smith describes it, adolescents seem to think of God as a combination of a divine butler and cosmic therapist. God is always there, will help when called upon, and then goes away. And overall this helps people be nicer and happier.

To clarify, Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD) is not a concept teens have come up with themselves. Rather, it is a reflection of the overall adult culture that adolescents absorb. Specifically, the trend to prioritize the individual has played a major role in the development of MTD. The individual has become the center of society, and therefore focusing on and developing ourselves as individuals is of utmost importance.

The predominance of MTD as a way of understanding religion does not necessarily mean adolescents are becoming less religious in terms of behavior or devotion. As I noted earlier, their actions are consistent with those associated with a relatively religious person. But they practice and understand religion in a qualitatively different way — from a tradition- or community-centered religion to a person- or individual-centered version of religion. According to teens, religion is not something that you give yourself up for, that you sacrifice yourself to for a higher power or particular church or specific denomination. Instead, it is something that is there to serve a person’s needs.

**A second question** our study addressed was how adolescents' religious identity changes as they begin to make the transition into young adulthood.

When we examine religiosity — assessed by attendance at worship services, frequency of personal prayer, and self-rated importance of religion — we find several interesting patterns. First, we observe a high level of stability. Around 45 to 55 percent of young adults look, religiously, just as they did as adolescents. So the religious trajectories adolescents follow during their teenage years often persist into young adulthood.

When we do see change, the primary direction is toward becoming less religious, as indicated by decreased attendance at services, limited prayer, and less emphasis on the importance of religion. About 50 percent of teens considered in the “upper levels” of religiosity as adolescents drop into one of the lower groups by the time they are young adults, between the ages of 18 and 22. Less than 30 percent experience the converse change, which indicates that there is little movement upward, a lot of people staying the same, and sizable shifts to a lower level of religiosity.

These patterns beg the question: What factors during the teenage years cause some to remain highly religious, and what factors drive others downward? After we examined a vast set of possible predictors, using a variety of analytic strategies, we consistently found three sets of factors that seemed especially important in leading to high levels of religiosity (or at least preventing a decrease) among young adults.

The first consists of internalized subjective religion, based on how important they believe religion is in their daily lives and their level of doubt about their faith when they were teenagers. The next set of factors is more a personal, or metaphysical, experience with religion — whether they felt they had experienced a miracle or had a prayer answered.

The last set of factors had to do with ties to others, primarily parents but also religious adults in their congregations. This group was the most influential in determining religiosity during young adulthood.

Parents who think religion is very important and who frequently attend worship services are much more likely to produce young adults who are highly religious. When we looked at the issue in a different way, we found that having highly religious parents was virtually a necessity for being a highly religious young adult. In other words, teens can't out-religious their parents. In this way parents essentially cap how religious the child is going to be, even as the child becomes a young adult.

As for the teenagers' own attendance at religious services, it does not seem to have much effect on their religious development during the transition to young adulthood. Although I try to avoid normative claims, I'm going to make one here: If I were talking to parents who were concerned about how religious their children are, I would stress that it is much more important that the parents themselves attend religious services, rather than try to force their adolescent children to go. Just seeing parents attend church instills a set of values that impacts religious behavior as a teen moves into young adulthood.



*"Are we there yet?"*





*"Hey, that's just one omniscient guy's opinion."*

**While these more objective aspects** of religion are clearly important, our research team is also concerned with what happens to young people's understanding of religion.

When we talk to young adults we find that Moralistic Therapeutic Deism tends to wane, or completely disappear. Many note that, in confronting challenges in their lives, MTD as a belief system is not up to the task. Yet, rather than turning to some external mechanism of moral authority, young adults become even more individualistic. When we ask about their ideas of what is right and wrong, one of the most common themes we hear is, "What seems right to me is the ultimate authority."

For example, when one young adult female was asked how she knew what was right or wrong, she said, "It's personal. It's up to the individual. Who am I to say?" From this perspective, everyone is free to decide what is right and wrong for themselves. There is no external moral authority or mechanism to tell anyone what to do.

Even when our subjects were forced to consider how to handle a difficult situation, a typical response was, "I would do what I thought made me happy or how I felt. I have no other way of knowing what to do but how I internally feel." In other words, young adults decide for themselves what is right or wrong. Of course, this also means that they are extremely hesitant to judge others, because others' choices — and the moral fidelity of those choices — are completely up to the person making them.

This kind of thinking has a significant impact on how young adults view religion. When we ask them what religion is, or what the basis of their religious beliefs are, we hear responses such as "Myself. It really comes down to that. I mean, how could there be an authority to what you believe? Somebody could force you and say you need to believe this, but you really can't force yourself to believe in anything." So they do not rely on any external mechanism in establishing the meaning and foundation of religion; the basis is the individual.

It's not that young adults are immoral. It's that when they think

about what is right and wrong, they tend not to see a connection to a greater moral framework. Our research suggests that this lack of an external framework is primarily because they have not been provided adequate psycho-social resources to make this connection to a higher level of moral obligations.

We believe this type of thinking also has important consequences for how young adults address pressing social issues. If everything is up to the individual, then how today's young adults think about such issues as healthcare or international conflicts may be systematically different than how older generations think. Having no connection to a civil or religious authority outside the individual puts questions of right or wrong back on each person. Everyone can decide for themselves.

Of course, the long-term impact of this shift in moral thinking has yet to be seen. Potentially, this moral individualism could be just a phase that young adults will outgrow as they make the full transition into adulthood. Or it may signal a more widespread cultural change.

We will be talking to these young adults again as they reach their late 20s. Hopefully their responses will provide further insights into these questions. [F]

Kyle Longest holds a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina.

To learn more, consult *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford University Press, 2005) and *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (Oxford Press, 2009), both by Christian Smith (with Melinda Denton and Patricia Herzog-Snell, respectively).

### Illustrations

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# Reshaping Student Life

By John Roberts

Major changes are in the works  
to cultivate a richer campus environment  
for intellectual development  
and social interaction.



**A**t High Point University, an ice cream truck makes daily rounds around campus. The posh student center features a terraced dining area and an outdoor swimming pool with Jacuzzi. In fact, the campus will soon have four outdoor pools.

A campus townhome community includes its own wellness center, and in December the university announced plans to build a 400-bed residential/student services facility that will cover two city blocks. Students can also take advantage of dry-cleaning services, and “campus concierges” collect feedback and provide answers to questions about all areas of campus life.

Nido Qubein, the North Carolina school’s seventh president, came to High Point in 2005 from a career as a business entrepreneur and motivational speaker. He pushed the liberal arts institution to pursue a recruiting edge through student services, with an emphasis on gleaming new facilities and special amenities.

The customer-service, business-centered model has produced results. Since 2005 undergraduate enrollment at High Point has increased from 1,450 to 3,800, the operating budget has tripled, the campus has doubled in size, and parent giving has soared from \$14,000 per year to \$2.9 million. The school’s goal is to enroll 4,800 students by 2015.

Along the way High Point has bulked up its faculty and academic programs, and in the past six years its students’ average SAT scores have jumped 100 points. The explosive growth has been called the “Miracle on Montlieu Avenue.”

So, can we expect to see the Furman campus undergo a similar explosion in construction any time soon?

Not exactly. But changes designed to more tightly integrate academic and student life — and offer a more edifying campus experience — are on the way.



**Last fall**, the Furman board of trustees voted to approve an expansive Housing and Student Life Master Plan that will reshape some campus facilities and cultivate a richer environment for intellectual development and social interaction. The plan calls specifically for sweeping renovations to the University Center and the residential areas.

“Students are coming to us with stronger credentials,” says Connie Carson, Furman’s vice president for student life. “They want a higher level of experiences than they had in high school.”

While Furman’s 82-page plan includes facility renovations and upgrades, Carson emphasizes that its overarching goal is to strengthen the connection between academics and student life. “They should meld together and complement one another,” she says. “Philosophically, we are moving along this path.

“We want to ensure that the in-class and out-of-class experiences for our students are integrated and provide a strong academic focus. We want our facilities to be nimble to changing student needs. This new plan will allow us the flexibility to adjust our programs over time.”

The upgrades are in line with conventional thought. Higher education experts say that all universities, regardless of their reputation or level of selectivity, need to have modern facilities and student-centered services to meet the expectations of prospective students.

Which is why, on today’s college campuses, student centers are replete with high-tech digital signage, plush movie theatres, and game rooms outfitted with flat-screen televisions and pool tables. Workout rooms rival those at private clubs, residence halls are roomier, and dining hall food is healthier and tastier. Some schools, including High Point, Wake Forest and Georgia Tech, now offer restaurants with wait staff.

**“Many colleges talk about bridging academic and student life. We want them to be seamless.”**

**— Connie Carson**  
*Vice President for Student Life*





Says Scott Derrick, Furman's director of student activities: "These sorts of things really speak to this generation."

George Kuh, Chancellor's Professor Emeritus and Director of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment at Indiana University, refers to the trend as a "physical plants arms race."

"All of this is a product of the background from which students come today," he says. "My brother and I shared a bedroom. Today's students cannot imagine living on a corridor in a room with another person. They have always had their own bedroom."

From residential life programs to student activities, campus recreation and health services, student expectations are likely to increase. The result: Student life divisions are playing a more prominent role on campuses, and their staffs are beefing up their programs to ensure that they meet expectations.

**As Carson says,** Furman envisions a campus in which academics permeate residential and extracurricular life.

The University Center, where renovations recently began, will soon become home to three programs currently housed in academic buildings: the (Lilly) Center for Vocational Reflection, Study Away/International Education, and Undergraduate Research and Internships. To make the student center more of a campus destination, it will also feature expanded gathering areas (both indoors and out) with comfortable seating, a larger food court, a "sports restaurant," more work space for student organizations, and a larger career services office. (See page 20.)

The University Center makeover is expected to cost approximately \$6.75 million.

Plans for the residential facilities, which will require more extensive work over a longer period of time, call for South Housing (McGlothlin, Blackwell, Manly, Poteat and Geer halls) to be addressed first. These buildings, among the oldest on campus, will be updated, with redesigned rooms and more informal spaces for study and conversation. The complex's underused quadrangle will be transformed into an attractive commons area, and new residence halls flanking a graded and leveled Blackwell (E) Field will be added.

When completed, South Housing will serve as a "first- and second-year residential college." Faculty fellows will be invited to develop high-impact out-of-class activities that will complement students' formal education.

Lakeside Housing will undergo similar renovations to include more lounges, meeting and advising areas, seminar rooms and gathering spaces. Both residential areas will have enhanced sustainability features.

The anticipated cost to revamp the residence halls is \$65 million.

Jane Wright, president of Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas, the architecture and planning firm that helped craft Furman's plan, says colleges and universities began to integrate living and learning environments in the late 1990s. The most common adaptations include placing seminar rooms and classrooms in residential environments. Some schools have also introduced a faculty-in-residence program, which Furman is considering.

In general, she says, this kind of environment helps students adjust to college more easily. They tend to have better grades and establish deeper friendships, and they are less likely to transfer or drop out of school.

"These are all very positive indicators for a university," says Wright, who is the lead planner on the Furman project. "Because there is proof [of the benefits], we are seeing many more requests."

**During her years** as assistant vice president of campus services and planning at Wake Forest, Carson played a leading role in developing the university's master plan, which was updated in 2007. Fresh from that experience when she arrived at Furman in 2008, she saw several immediate needs.

"I was surprised to see how far behind we were in some of the residence halls," says Carson. "And when I walked into the University Center, I didn't see students hanging out. It was more like a service center than a student center."

Dozens of administrators, students, trustees and architects worked 18 months to develop the Housing and Student Life Master Plan. If all goes as expected, Carson says it will be completed over the course of three five-year phases.

And where Furman is concerned, Carson offers a different perspective than Indiana's Kuh. The Furman plan, she says, is less about shiny buildings and physical improvements than about creating a life-changing learning environment for students.

"We are not in an arms race for amenities," Carson says. "The learning outcomes are what's important. Many colleges talk about bridging academic and student life. We want them to be seamless."

Kuh, a widely published author on higher education trends, does point out that, because students spend roughly three-quarters of their time outside of classrooms, it makes sense for colleges to "try to thread together what students do inside the classroom to what they do outside the classroom."

"You try to create an environment where the discussions from the classroom spill over into student life. The students can learn from each



other, and you can transform your campus into a learning community.” In the end, he says, “Students are more satisfied and benefit more. More institutions are looking to carve out these types of activities.”

This approach will allow Furman to expand the concepts behind current programs for select students and apply them across the board. These programs include Engaged Living, which “promotes student success, supports Furman’s academic mission through contributions to borderless learning, and fosters intentional engagement among students, faculty and staff,” and the Greenbelt Community, where residents share a lifestyle that embraces sustainable practices.

**Parents and students** are also gravitating to institutions that provide strong on-campus medical care and mental health support, areas of student life which Furman is already addressing.

When Steve Dawes, director of the Furman Counseling Center, came to the university in 1995, his staff included two counselors. He now manages four clinicians, a nutritionist and two consulting psychiatrists.

“We have grown in size and scope to meet student need,” he says. “We do many more psychiatric consultations and have more of a clinical focus.”

This year the center’s appointment load was up 27 percent, and Dawes says most of the cases he and his staff see are linked to depression and anxiety.

“Students are not as resilient in coping with their emotional problems on their own as they once were,” he says. “There is a lot of speculation about what’s causing this. We live in a society that is increasingly reliant on technology. Often, relationships are shallow, and we see and communicate with people face to face much less.”

Dawes adds that more students enroll each year with existing conditions that need to be monitored. “Children with problems are identified much earlier now, and the medications have really improved,” he says. “Fifteen years ago some of the people with these conditions could not have attended college. Now they can.”

Given these issues, Furman’s Housing and Student Life Master Plan, which encourages the development of more in-depth relationships among students, faculty and staff, will further complement the university’s ongoing efforts to help students cope with the demands and stresses of college life. [F]

*The author is director of communications at Furman.*

Aside from the changes to the University Center and residential facilities, the Housing and Student Life Master Plan also calls for:

A pedestrian and bike path connecting Furman’s Vinings apartment complex on Duncan Chapel Road to campus.

A Greek village.

A transport system from the North Village apartment complex to central areas of campus.

Additional outdoor recreational sports venues.

Want to read the full plan? Click the Student Life link at [www.furman.edu](http://www.furman.edu).



# Furman BECAUSE FURMAN MATTERS



*Renovations began this spring on the student center's upper level.*



*Additions will include the Center for Study Away and International Education.*

## Destination Central: Trone Student Center

IMAGINE A FURMAN BUILDING that offers spectacular lakeside views and inviting areas for lounging and relaxing — yet also serves as an accessible, one-stop shop for a host of academic and co-curricular opportunities. A perfect place, if you will, to integrate the university's social and academic endeavors.

That's the plan for Furman's University Center, where a \$6.75 million update, launched this spring, will transform the building into a true campus gathering spot by drawing students in from the residence halls and enriching the campus culture through flexible programming and dynamic options for fun and relaxation.

A \$3.5 million naming gift from trustee David Trone '77 and his wife, June, will enhance career-related and international programming, expand social and dining areas, and provide more functional and innovative work space for student groups — all of which will make the Trone Student Center a student destination and, ultimately, will bolster recruitment and retention.

Says Trone, "During many visits to Furman to see our daughter Julia [a 2012 graduate], it became clear that the University Center needed changes to be more of a central gathering place for the student body. Rod Smolla was clear on this priority, and so June and I wanted to make it happen for future generations of students."

Among the building's most prominent new features will be a two-story, glassed-in lobby, made possible by an anonymous donor. The area, to be

known as the "campus living room," will overlook an expanded lakeside courtyard for performances, festivals and other major events. Inside, comfortable furniture in intimate arrangements will create cozy spots for students to linger and relax.

As part of the redesign, International Education and Study Away, Internships and Undergraduate Research, and the (Lilly) Center for Vocational Reflection will move into the building — further integrating academic and co-curricular activities and making services for students more convenient.

### Construction schedule:

#### Phase I (under way):

Renovation of upper level, including student "living room," Student Life area, vocational programming, Study Away and International Education.

#### Phase II (begins May 2013):

Renovation of lower level (Paladen, lower atrium, food court).

#### Phase III (contingent on funding):

Construction of sports restaurant and patio that leads to boardwalk beside lake.





The new look will feature reimagined areas for students to linger and relax.

Naming Opportunities

Lower level	Paladen .....	\$300,000
	Sports Restaurant/Game Room .....	\$150,000
	Patio .....	\$50,000
Upper level	Career Center .....	\$500,000
	Student Media Suite .....	\$250,000
	Leadership, Vocational Studies and Student Life Suite .....	\$250,000
	Boardwalk .....	\$200,000
	Student Organization Center .....	\$200,000
	Student Organization Patio .....	\$50,000
	Conference Room .....	\$50,000

To learn more about the Trone Student Center renovations, contact [patricia.carswell@furman.edu](mailto:patricia.carswell@furman.edu) or visit [www.becausefurmanmatters.com](http://www.becausefurmanmatters.com).



The right chemistry

KEITH AND DARA EDWARDS KELLER (above) graduated from Furman in 1994 with degrees in chemistry. Both went on to earn doctorates at the University of Virginia and to jobs in the corporate sector. Keith now works with Milliken & Co. in Spartanburg, S.C.

The Kellers have always valued their Furman educations and especially the direction and support they received from Lon Knight, longtime chair of the chemistry department. When they learned about the Furman Standard, a program that advances the university's tradition of exceptional mentoring by honoring influential professors or administrators, they decided to make a donation (matched by Milliken) that would recognize Knight and support Furman's efforts to provide a permanent fund to encourage professional growth, research and training for faculty and staff.

The Kellers are the youngest graduates so far to donate to the Furman Standard, which has raised approximately \$1.4 million (toward a goal of \$3 million) in honor of 21 mentors. Donors make a gift or pledge of \$25,000 or a planned gift of \$100,000.

In addition to the Kellers, other recent donors are Nick Theodore '52, former state legislator and lieutenant governor of South Carolina, and his wife, Emilie, whose gift honors John E. Johns, president of Furman from 1976 to 1994; and Mary Seawell Metz '58, a longtime professor and college administrator in California, whose donation honors Alfred S. Reid, professor of English from 1955 until his death in 1976 and author of the most recent history of the university.

Visit [www.becausefurmanmatters.com](http://www.becausefurmanmatters.com) to learn more about the Furman Standard.



JEREMY FLEMING (3)

## Stepping outside the bubble

APPROXIMATELY 700 students, faculty and staff converged on Poinsett Highway April 11 for a day of service that kicked off the Poinsett Corridor Revitalization Coalition (PCRC) project. The Furman volunteers worked along the road and in nearby neighborhoods, painting buildings, weeding community gardens and cleaning up the roadside. The PCRC is a collaborative, multi-year venture between Furman, county and city government, and local agencies to revitalize the corridor from Furman to downtown Greenville. Learn more at [thepoinsettdistrict.org](http://thepoinsettdistrict.org).

## Weight of water: Student project to aid village



FURMAN'S STUDENT-LED Global Issues Forum (GIF) addresses the challenges of an increasingly globalized world and promotes discourse about issues of global importance. GIF sponsors a different series of events each semester on a topic of general interest.

This spring, the focus was on global water issues. But GIF did more than talk about the subject. Through its sponsorship of a "WaterWalk" April 13, the group sought not only to build awareness of how water is connected to other sustainability themes, but to raise funds to complete a potable water system for the Guatemalan village of Esperanza San Antonio.

The WaterWalk was a simulation of the lengthy trek that millions throughout the developing world experience each day to find drinkable water. Participants carried water bottles and containers of various sizes around campus to help raise awareness of the problem. The Furman effort will provide the means for the Guatemalan community to purchase and construct a system that pipes and filters spring water to the village.

Furman professor Bruce Clemens (business and accounting) and students have visited the site to collect baseline information and begin the process. Subsequent visits will be made to check on the installation, confirm that the money is spent as intended, and examine the program's public health and environmental impact.

"The project provides a unique learning opportunity for students," says Clemens. "More importantly, it will leave a lasting mark and help a very impoverished village in a tangible, life-changing way."

The Duke Endowment has committed up to \$12,500 to match gifts made to the project, which is estimated to cost \$25,000.

Learn more at [www.furmanwaterwalk.com](http://www.furmanwaterwalk.com) or e-mail [bruce.clemens@furman.edu](mailto:bruce.clemens@furman.edu).





## Where things go bump in the night (and at other times)

**NO ONE HAS BEEN** sucked into the television set or otherwise vanished without a trace — at least not yet — but for years the denizens of Cherrydale, Furman's Alumni House, have been looking over their shoulders. The place, they say, is haunted, and they wonder if James C. Furman himself, the school's first president and the antebellum house's first owner, is causing the problems.

Perhaps their concerns are not far-fetched. After all, the university did disturb Cherrydale 13 years ago, uprooting it from its moorings three miles from campus and transporting it to its current spot overlooking Mickel Tennis Center, at the highest point on campus, where it sits in solitary — some might say ghostly — isolation.

There are the stories: that Dr. Furman died in an upstairs bedroom (front right, if you're facing the house), and that a member of the Stone family, which later owned the home, died in another upstairs room (front left).

Then there are the unexplained phenomena: slamming doors, ceiling fans starting and stopping on their own, eerie sounds and noises. Plus the creaks and groans that can be expected from a 160-year-old structure.

It's gotten to the point that the university's custodial staff refuses to clean the house after dark. A few years back, a docent on her first assignment had such a scary experience that she ran screaming into the night — and hasn't been seen since.

Judy Wilson, director of parent programs who is, from all indications, a reasonably stable, rational human being, tells of working alone in the house one evening, locked up nice and tight.

Suddenly, she heard a door slam. It sounded like the side porch door, which is the standard entrance/exit point for the staff. Yet she didn't hear the tell-tale bell that plays when the door opens.

She walked to the stairway landing and called out. No response.

Alarmed, she summoned Public Safety. An officer came to the side door — which was unlocked. A walkabout found nothing amiss, but when Wilson asked her colleagues the next day, everyone assured her the door was locked when they left.

Longtime residents Tina Hayes Ballew '78 and Theresa Cureton describe a harsh metallic sound that comes from the basement and can be heard all over the house. "It's like someone's dragging a file cabinet across the concrete floor," says Cureton. The noise occurs sporadically, usually when few people are around, and can last for half a minute or more.

But one day recently everyone was on hand to hear it. After much discussion and consternation, they decided to investigate. Led by the manly duo of Tom Triplitt '76 and Leo Fackler '03, the group crept down the long, narrow stairway to the basement, where alumni files (of the living and, in their own room, the dead) and assorted memorabilia — including a tombstone — are stored.

Nothing had stirred. Not one item was out of place.

(Insert scary woo-woo here.)

Somehow, though, the staff soldiers on amid the creepy, the kooky, the

mysterious and the spooky. Maybe, they say, Dr. Furman's just restless and cranky.

If that's the case, claims Ballew, they can live with his antics. "We love him," she says. "We embrace him."

She sounds convincing. But what about the next time something happens? Because you know what they say — in Cherrydale, no one can hear you scream.

— JIM STEWART





## Distinguished guests come to call

WHEN SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR came to town in March to preside over several cases with the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, she made a side trip to Furman in conjunction with the Carol N. Ney National Mock Trial Tournament. Furman was one of eight sites for the opening round of the 2012 championships.

O'Connor was the first woman to be chosen for the U.S. Supreme Court, where she served from 1981 to 2006. Retired justices are allowed to sit on appeals courts and render binding decisions.

At Furman she spoke briefly to the Mock Trial competitors — 24 teams representing 18 colleges. O'Connor told the students to value what Mock

Trial taught them about the art of persuasion.

"If you can learn to persuade fellow classmates, or a judge on a moot court competition, or a group of people . . . you've learned a skill that is really important for the rest of your lives," she said.

A Furman team was among the 48 nationwide to advance to the finals in St. Paul, Minn., marking the 16th consecutive year Furman has qualified for the finals.

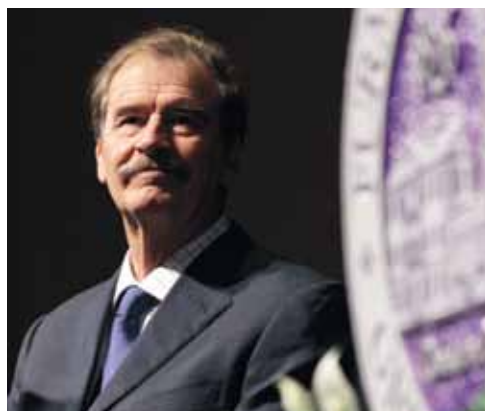
Another distinguished guest who visited the campus this spring was Vicente Fox, the former president of Mexico, who spoke to a large crowd in McAlister Auditorium April 18.

Fox's visit was his first to South Carolina. A coalition of student and departmental groups, from Young Republicans and College Democrats to Students in the Hispanic Organization of Learning and Awareness, joined forces to sponsor the program.

Fox touched on a number of issues during his hour-long appearance but devoted much of his time to the drug trade. He argued that the United States has been ineffective in the drug wars and done little to address the international nature of the problem. On a more positive note, he emphasized to students the importance of "building bridges, not walls," and quoted Cicero in praising the rejuvenating spirit present at universities like Furman.



JEREMY FLEMING (4)



## A shift in orientation

FOR YEARS, FURMAN held freshman orientation at the beginning of the academic year. First-year students arrived on campus a few days before everyone else, and while they enjoyed carnivals, mixers, field day and a picnic at the president's house, they would also meet with their advisors and plan their class schedules.

This year, Furman has tweaked orientation to offer a separate summer program that focuses on academics and class selection. New students may attend one of five two-day sessions between June 18 and 30, during which they'll work with their advisors to plan their initial class schedules — without the excitement (and distractions) of moving in.

The intent is to help students make a successful

transition to college, better understand the value of a balanced class schedule, learn about the registration system, and be introduced to the academic support systems on campus. They will receive their official class schedules later in the summer and will have an opportunity to make adjustments when they arrive in August.

Students who are unable to attend a two-day session will have an opportunity to work with an advisor on the phone or via Skype.

When school officially opens August 16, the majority of new students should be ready to go. And they'll still enjoy four days of traditional meet-and-greet activities before classes begin August 20.





**"All the good artists come from an awful childhood, and I had a pretty normal family. So I kind of resent them for that."**

— JESSE TYLER FERGUSON  
OF THE HIT TELEVISION SHOW  
"MODERN FAMILY," ON  
GROWING UP IN NEW MEXICO.  
FERGUSON VISITED FURMAN  
IN FEBRUARY.

## **Commentary:** Selected quotes and observations from Furman programs and personalities

**"If universities are able to convince the justices that adoption of a color-blind standard for admissions would dramatically impact the quality of the educational experience for all students, and by extension damage the long-term interests of the nation, they may have some chance of persuading the critical swing vote, likely to be Justice [Anthony] Kennedy, that it would be wrong and highly disruptive suddenly to abolish all race-conscious programs in college admissions."**

— ROD SMOLLA, FURMAN PRESIDENT, IN AN *INSIDE HIGHER ED* ARTICLE ABOUT THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION TO REVISIT THE ISSUE OF WHETHER COLLEGES HAVE THE RIGHT TO CONSIDER RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THEIR ADMISSION DECISIONS.

**"Evangelicals like their leaders with a little zing — and that Romney doesn't have. And, of course, his social milieu and cultural expression just doesn't match theirs very well."**

— JIM GUTH, WILLIAM R. KENAN, JR., PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, IN AN ASSOCIATED PRESS STORY ABOUT MITT ROMNEY'S STRUGGLE TO CONNECT WITH WHITE EVANGELICAL VOTERS.

**"What I learned, other than the obvious insight that if you want to run faster you have to run faster, is that being secure enough to ask for and receive help is a hallmark of growth and maturity. You receive a more realistic image of yourself than the one in the mirror. Sometimes it's hard to face, but most of the time it feels like a gift."**

— RACHEL TOOR, WRITER AND TEACHER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA, IN A *RUNNING TIMES* ARTICLE ABOUT HER WORK WITH FIRST (FURMAN INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC RUNNING AND TRAINING).

**"I was a good Catholic girl in a good Baptist school."**

— MADELINE ROGERO '79, RECENTLY ELECTED MAYOR OF KNOXVILLE, TENN., DISCUSSING HER FURMAN DAYS IN A *KNOXVILLE NEWS SENTINEL* STORY.

**"Lots of people have laws in their hearts. You do not have a right to force that on other people."**

— ATTORNEY SARAH WEDDINGTON, WHO SUCCESSFULLY ARGUED THE ROE V. WADE ABORTION CASE BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT, DURING A CAMPUS APPEARANCE IN MARCH.

**"Protecting gun rights does not mean that gun fights are going to break out."**

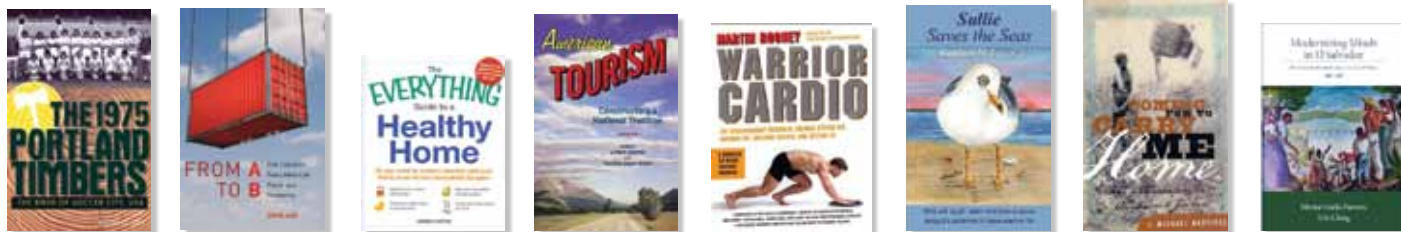
— DAVID KEENE, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION, DURING A CAMPUS APPEARANCE IN MARCH.

**"I always thought that being homeless was the last place I could go, but as it turns out, being homeless was the first step up."**

— MARGARET TRIPP, GREENVILLE RESIDENT, DURING A FEBRUARY PANEL DISCUSSION ON HOMELESSNESS. SHE NOW OWNS A HOME.

**"It's important to come to places like this and play big teams on their own soil and get results. At times it wasn't pretty, but we grounded out the result tonight."**

— U.S. SOCCER STAR CLINT DEMPSEY '05, QUOTED BY THE HUFFINGTON POST. DEMPSEY SCORED THE ONLY GOAL IN THE UNITED STATES' 1-0 WIN OVER ITALY FEBRUARY 29, THE FIRST AMERICAN VICTORY OVER THE FOUR-TIME WORLD CHAMPIONS IN 78 YEARS.



## Bookmarks: Featuring summaries of recent publications by alumni and faculty

**MICHAEL ORR** '05, *The 1975 Portland Timbers: The Birth of Soccer City* (The History Press, 2012). Delve into the story of the Portland (Ore.) team's first season in the original North American Soccer League, when the expansion Timbers won their division and advanced to the league's championship game before losing to Tampa Bay. The publisher says that, during the course of the season, the team won the hearts of its home city "and left an indelible stamp on the Rose City's sporting landscape." The author is managing writer and editor at FC Media, LLC, in Portland, and is also a freelance soccer writer and podcast host.

**DAVID AXE** '00, *From A to B: How Logistics Fuels American Power and Prosperity* (Potomac Books Inc., 2011). The publisher says Axe presents "the story of modern American logistics, which will continue to shape the nation's role in this century. The book begins with a U.S. Army transportation company in Iraq during the height of insurgent attacks on American supply networks. Then it tours the shipyards, railways, highways, airports, classrooms, corporate boardrooms, and laboratories that make up our complex and colorful transportation culture. With competition stiffening and our national transportation infrastructure crumbling, we must find ways to move resources and products even more efficiently if we are to thrive." Axe is a military correspondent based in Columbia, S.C., and has written several books with military themes. He is a regular contributor to Voice of America, C-SPAN, *Wired* and other sites.

**KIMBERLY BUTTON** '97, *The Everything Guide to a Healthy Home* (Adams Media, 2012). The author struggled for more than a decade with medical conditions that could not be cured by conventional medicine. After examining her life and the hidden toxins lurking in everyday items, she discovered that many of her health problems could be attributed to items in the home. Her health improved after she created a non-toxic space. With this book she shares her story and ideas. Button is a television correspondent, a writer for national print publications, and the owner of a green living consulting company in Orlando, Fla. Visit [www.kimbutton.com](http://www.kimbutton.com).

**J. MARK SOUTHER** '94 and Nicholas Dagen Bloom, editors, *American Tourism: Constructing a National Tradition* (Center for American Places, 2012). According to the publisher, the book "reveals the remarkable stories behind the places Americans love to visit. From Independence Hall to Las Vegas, and from Silver Springs to Seattle's Pike Place Market, the collection pulls back the curtain on many of America's most successful tourist attractions to reveal the carefully hidden transformations that turn places into destinations. . . . Covering issues of design, culture, and impact, *American Tourism* will appeal to scholars, tourism professionals, and armchair travelers alike." Souther is associate professor of history at Cleveland State University. Bloom teaches history at New York Institute of Technology.

**MARTIN ROONEY** '93, *Warrior Cardio: The Revolutionary Metabolic Training System for Burning Fat, Building Muscle, and Getting Fit* (William Morrow, 2012). From fitness and martial arts expert Martin Rooney, author of *Training for Warriors*

and *Ultimate Warrior Workouts*, comes a 12-week workout and diet plan for those hoping to shed fat and increase muscle mass. *Warrior Cardio* provides the latest scientifically proven techniques for cardiovascular training paired with a weight loss plan. Tony Caterisano of Furman's health sciences department wrote a chapter for the book. Rooney, who lives in Fair Lawn, N.J., is COO and director of training of the Parisi Speed School and an international fitness and martial arts consultant. Visit [www.trainingforwarriors.com](http://www.trainingforwarriors.com).

**GOFFINET McLAREN** '92, *Sullie Saves the Seas* (ProsePress, 2011). McLaren, an ocean lover who lives on Pawleys Island, S.C., is an activist against plastic pollution and its effects on ocean habitats. This children's book tells how a seagull named Sullie discovers that plastic pollution is destroying his precious Turtle Beach. Sullie calls his friends to action, and they take aim at those who are causing environmental damage to beaches and to Sullie's ocean pals. The book targets children 8 to 12 years old, but kids of all ages will laugh with and learn from the savvy seagull's schemes, while discovering ways to preserve and protect the ocean.

**J. MICHAEL MARTINEZ** '84, *Coming for to Carry Me Home: Race in America from Abolitionism to Jim Crow* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2011). In his eighth book, Martinez, an attorney and educator from Monroe, Ga., examines race relations from the 1830s to the 1880s, analyzing how Lincoln and his contemporaries developed their views of race and following their work through the start of the Jim Crow era. Historian Orville Vernon Burton '69 of Clemson University calls the book

an "unflinching portrait" in which "philosophies, visions, aspirations, and foibles of political leaders provide high drama as well as compelling history. This book is an important contribution to our understanding of the history of politics during a critical half century of changing race relations." Historian Ronald C. White, Jr., adds, "The strength of Martinez's narrative is the rich mixture of ways [he] invites readers to feel the tensions and experience the ambiguities of known and unknown Americans who struggle with the nation's most enduring moral dilemma." Visit [www.jmichaelmartinez.com](http://www.jmichaelmartinez.com).

## FROM FACULTY

**ERIK CHING** and Hector Lindo-Fuentes, *Modernizing Minds in El Salvador: Education Reform and the Cold War, 1960–1980* (University of New Mexico Press, 2012). When the military regime in El Salvador instituted reforms in the 1960s in an effort to modernize the country and undermine ideological radicalism, its most ambitious reform focused on education — in particular, the use of televisions in classrooms. From 1968–79, students received instruction through programs broadcast from the capital city of San Salvador, but the Salvadoran teachers' union opposed the content and the method of reform and launched two massive strikes. The military's violent response alienated educators and pushed many of them into guerrilla fronts. The authors examine how education reform became entwined in debates over theories of modernization and the politics of anticommunism, and how the movement pushed the country into brutal infighting. Ching has taught history at Furman since 1998; his co-author teaches at Fordham University in New York.





JEREMY FLEMING

## 'Fastest-growing sport' coming to campus

FURMAN ATHLETICS will enter new territory when the university introduces men's and women's lacrosse as varsity sports during the 2014–15 academic year. In making the announcement February 9, director of athletics Gary Clark described lacrosse as "the fastest growing sport in the NCAA."

The addition of varsity lacrosse (Furman's club lacrosse program dates to the mid-1980s) will give the university 20 intercollegiate sports, 10 each for men and women. The Southern Conference, of which Furman is a member, does not sponsor lacrosse, so the university's league affiliation is to be determined.

NCAA Division I lacrosse, which competes in the spring, currently features more than 90 women's and 60 men's programs and has the top graduation success rate (GSR) among all Division I sports. According to NCAA figures released last May, women's lacrosse posted a four-year class average GSR of 94 percent, which topped all NCAA-sanctioned sports. Men's lacrosse achieved an 88 percent GSR over the same period, the best among any men's sport in Division I.

President Rod Smolla said, "From our students to our alumni and the greater lacrosse community, there is tremendous momentum around the addition of these two teams to our Division I athletics program. We intend to be competitive at the national level and reward our fans with an exciting brand of the fastest game on two feet."

The decision to add the sport is linked to the university's strategic initiatives. Lacrosse is expected to boost recruiting efforts in several key markets, among them the Atlantic Coast, the Northeast, Florida and California.

The announcement also marks the latest indication of rising interest in the sport in the Upstate of South Carolina. A number of local high school teams have introduced programs in recent years, and this May Greenville hosted the Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association championships. MCLA is a national organization of non-NCAA college lacrosse programs. More than 200 colleges in the United States and Canada are affiliated with MCLA.

Clark said Furman hopes to have head coaches in place soon so that they can begin to recruit the first class of scholarship players, to enroll in the fall of 2013. The first assistant coaches are expected to be added in the spring of 2013. Furman plans to provide the NCAA scholarship maximums for each program — 12 for women and 12.6 for men.

As to where the teams will play, areas under consideration are Roberts Rugby Field, Paladin Stadium, Stone Soccer Stadium and several practice fields. Furman anticipates installing synthetic turf on one field so that practice and games can take place without damaging the turf.

# laxstax

## 10

Number of players each team fields at one time.

## 3

Types of sticks: short (midfielders and attack men), long (defenders), goalie.

## 1994–95

Last time Furman added a sport (women's soccer).

## 64

Estimated number of NCAA men's lacrosse teams when Furman goes varsity in 2015.

## 20

Number of varsity athletic teams Furman will have with lacrosse.

## 101

Estimated number of NCAA women's lacrosse teams when Furman goes varsity.





## FURMAN AND THE TIES THAT BIND

**WHEN I ATTENDED** a funeral of an alumnus in March, I was once again reminded of what a special place Furman is.

John Vernon Platt '60 died March 17. He was a Baptist minister whose last church was Spring Valley Baptist in Columbia, S.C. (Full obituary, page 38.)

I met him in May 2010 when he returned to campus for Commencement, where he joined a number of his classmates in celebrating the 50th anniversary of their graduation. He had just lost his wife to cancer and was struggling with his grief, but he delivered a beautiful invocation at the dinner before his class led the Class of 2010 into the graduation ceremony.

John loved Furman, and he made that clear to all who knew him. His Furman connections were mentioned many times during the funeral service. The pastor even wore a purple tie in honor of John's devotion to alma mater.

For me, though, the most touching part of the service was hearing the stories about the men from the houses at 4 and 6 Nona Street, near the downtown Furman campus. I don't think the street even exists anymore, but the friendships and memories remain.

For more than 50 years, the residents of those two houses have gotten together at least once annually to share stories about their lives and to reminisce about their college days. Some of their tales are evidently the stuff of legends. And the gatherings were usually organized by John Platt.

Those men and their families have remained close because of their Furman bonds. Many of them have children who attended Furman as well — like John, the father of Todd '89 and Bryan '91



I'm sure that many schools have groups of friends who stay close through the years. But Furman seems to have more than most — which just goes to show that there's something about our time at Furman that creates great stories and great friendships, like those of the men from Nona Street

**WELCOME KATE!:** Kate Hofler '09 has joined the constituent relations staff as Web communications coordinator. She previously worked as communications director for Greenville Forward, a local nonprofit whose goal is to enhance the city's quality of life by developing and promoting a strong vision for growth and development in the years ahead.

Kate graduated from Furman with a double major in English and political science. She was a member of Tri Delta and Senior Order, was Panhellenic president, and served as the student editor of the university's internal news site.

The Web communications coordinator is a new position for our department and will help us strengthen our digital communication program. As we learn and grow with this new venture, we want your thoughts. Please share any ideas you may have by e-mailing [kate.hofler@furman.edu](mailto:kate.hofler@furman.edu).

With Kate at the helm, we look forward to connecting with you in creative new ways.

**FAMILY WEEKEND:** This year the constituent relations staff is deeply involved in planning Family Weekend. The 2012 program is scheduled September 28–30, with Western Carolina University as the opponent on football Saturday. Judy Wilson and Patty White are taking the lead as we make arrangements for one of the major weekends of fall semester.

Information will be forthcoming this summer. For all Furman news regarding parent/family needs, visit <http://alumni.furman.edu> and click the Parents link.

**HOMECOMING 2012:** It's never too early to begin planning for Homecoming. Homecoming 2012 will be the weekend of October 19–21, with Southern Conference arch-rival Georgia Southern coming to town for the football game.

Classes ending in 2 and 7 will have reunions, and the Class of 1962 will be celebrating its 50th in grand style. We will also once again hold the "5th Quarter" event (for alumni who have graduated in the last 10 years) immediately after the game.

We always try to make each Homecoming more exciting than the last, so please plan to attend and see what we have in store this year. Information should be coming your way by mid-summer.

**I'VE GOTTA WEAR SHADES:** I recently had the pleasure of working with the Furman Admission Office when it hosted events for accepted students and for major scholarship candidates. I was amazed at the caliber of students — and parents — who are interested in Furman. Were we ever this smart and poised?

Applications increased by more than 20 percent this year, surpassing 6,000 for the first time and easily establishing a school record. If the potential students I met are any indication, Furman's future is quite bright indeed.

— TOM TRIPLITT

*The author, a 1976 graduate, is executive director of constituent relations and alumni programs.*



## CLASS NOTES, SPRING 2012

### 31

On February 29, the South Carolina House of Representatives passed a resolution honoring **Anne Pickens Collins** for “her enduring legacy of selfless service and meaningful accomplishments.” Anne, who lives in Chester, celebrated her 102nd birthday January 9. She worked for many years as a journalist and in the family real estate business. Long active in Chester County civic affairs, she is the author of 13 books, most of them about local history, and is a recipient of the state’s Order of the Silver Crescent, which recognizes outstanding achievements and community contributions.

### 59

**Sidney Bland** was invited to give the “State of the Field” address at the 2012 Advanced Placement U.S. History Reading in Louisville, Ky. Sidney is a retired professor at James Madison University in Virginia. He speaks and writes on American women’s history and the Gilded Age/Progressive Era.

### 69

**Beverly Bindseil Hunter** of Greenville, child care services supervisor for the South Carolina Department of Social Services, received the 2012 Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) President’s Award for her contributions to public policy on behalf of South Carolina’s children and families. Beverly, the first South Carolinian to receive the award, was nominated by the state’s Early Childhood Association for her work in setting statewide standards and professional development support for early care and education programs. SECA is a 14-state group with more than 20,000 members.

### 72

#### THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

**Carolyn Cason Matthews** was one of five women honored by the Girl Scouts of South Carolina — Mountains to Midlands at the Women of Distinction Awards Dinner March 22 in Columbia. The event recognized women who exemplify excellence

in service, leadership, community, visibility and professionalism. Carolyn is a state administrative law judge. She has been a staff attorney and law clerk to S.C. Supreme Court Justice George T. Gregory, Jr., an assistant attorney general, and counsel to the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee. She is a graduate of the Riley Diversity Leaders Institute at Furman and currently serves as president of the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association.

### 73

**John Weatherford**, chief operating officer of Public Broadcasting Atlanta, has been elected to a three-year term on the Georgia Association of Broadcasters Board of Directors. Among other duties, John oversees all operations of Atlanta’s NPR radio affiliate and its PBS station.

### 75

**Jay Bocook**, director of athletic bands at Furman, was inducted into the American Bandmasters Association March 1. The group recognizes outstanding achievement by concert band conductors and composers. Jay was also the clinician for the South Carolina Band Directors Association All-State Senior Band this spring.

### 77

#### THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

**Walter Johnson** has completed 20 years on the faculty of North Greenville University, where he serves as dean of the College of Christian Studies and professor of philosophy and Christian studies.

### 79

**Sherrie Bridges Crow** has retired from teaching after 32 years in the DeKalb County (Ga.) School System. She is an award-winning National Board Certified Teacher in English Language Arts. She is now enjoying a second career as a realtor with Keller Williams Realty in Decatur.

**Susan Martore-Baker** has been appointed president of Cambridge Trust Company of New Hampshire. She is based in Concord and joins the company with 30 years of trust and investment experience, most recently as senior vice president at Citizens Private Bank & Trust.

**Cindy Tyler Meares** has joined Cherry, Bekaert & Holland, L.L.P., as director of tax in its Aiken, S.C., practice. She is a member of the board of Aiken Rotary Club and treasurer for several organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, Friends of the Aiken Railroad Depot, and Community Care and Counseling of Aiken.

### 81

**Pat Loon Hensley** of Fountain Inn, S.C., a longtime educator, has published an e-book, *Useful Information In and Out of the Classroom 2011*, which offers resources for public school, private school and home schooling. For more about the book, visit [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). Read her blog at [successfulteaching.blogspot.com](http://successfulteaching.blogspot.com).

### 83

**Stacey Peter Anfindsen** is the 2012 president of the Raleigh, N.C., Regional Association of REALTORS®. Stacey is also director for Triangle Multiple Listing Service, Inc., and is on the advisory board of governors for Prestonwood Country Club.

**Paul Foster** of West Chester, Pa., has been named a principal with Turner Investments, an international firm where he is global head of consultant relations and senior managing director.

### 84

**ADOPTION: Glenn Allen Barbee, Jr.**, a son, Casey Glenn Barbee, November 28. Casey was born January 3, 2002. They live in Marietta, Ga. Allen was recently appointed director of music ministries at Chamblee Methodist Church and is still director of bands at St. Martin’s Episcopal School and music director and conductor of Peachtree Symphonic Winds.

### 85

**David M. Schilli**, an attorney with Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A., in Charlotte, N.C., has been elected to a two-year term as vice president of the Carolinas Chapter of the Turnaround Management Association, an international nonprofit dedicated to corporate renewal. David practices in the areas of commercial bankruptcy, commercial loan workouts, and restructurings.

### 87

#### THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

Commander **Joel Smithwick** has returned to duty at the Jacksonville (Fla.) Naval Hospital following a six-month deployment to Afghanistan, where he was a public health advisor to the Afghan National Army and Police forces.

### 88

**EveLyn Mantz Wedge** has earned a Master of Science degree in clinical mental health counseling from Mercer University in Atlanta. She is a psychotherapist at The Conley Center.

### 90

Wren Solutions, an Atlanta-based loss-prevention technology provider, has named **Amelia Fusaro** president and chief operating officer. She was previously a strategic business consultant to emerging technology companies.

**Tod Hyche** of the Greenville firm of Smith Moore Leatherwood has been named a top attorney for 2012 by *South Carolina Super Lawyers* magazine.

**Scott Sauls** recently accepted a new position as senior pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church in Nashville, Tenn.



## 2011-12 ALUMNI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

J. Chris Brown '89, president; Leslie L. Smith '91, president-elect; Rebecca Ann Armacost '89, vice president; Clare Folio Morris '83, past president; Lynn Neely Bailey '78; N. Staten Bitting, Jr. '75; Frank W. Blackwell '90; Sidney R. Bland '59; Tracy Hulsey Bond '90; Kevin R. Bryant '85; O. Vernon Burton '69; Mary Lou Walch Cagle '69; Paul D. Goebel '63; Michael L. Guynn '91; Jimmie E. Harley '58; Charles D. Hardy '89; Shannon Scruby Henderson '75; Gail Laible Hughes '83; Gwinn Earle Kneeland '89; C. Todd Malo '95; Thomas A. Marshall '77; James N. Martin '79; Herman A. Matherson, Jr. '79; Andrew C. Medlyn '97; Matthew A. Miller '99; William P. Morrow, Jr. '54; Emmett L. Patrick '56; Scott W. Raeber '92; Gordon D. Seay '61; E. Leon Smith '61; George O. Short '54; Connie Gartrell Williams '74.

Ex-Officio and Other Members: Rod Smolla, president; Mike Gatchell '91, vice president for development; Tom Triplitt '76, director of Alumni Association; Tina Hayes Ballew '78, associate director of Alumni Association; Cal Hurst '04, president, Young Alumni Council; James Crockett '12, president, Student Alumni Council; Teddy Hess '12, president, Association of Furman Students; Joel Bloom '12, president, Senior Class.

## 91

**Kevin Byrne** of Atlanta, vice president and chief operating officer of The University Financing Foundation, is the 2012 president of the Association of University Research Parks. The group's focus is on creating programs to help develop the next generation of research park directors and university administrators.

**Leslie Smith** of Jacksonville, Fla., was recently promoted to director of pricing for RailAmerica. In this new position she focuses on garnering revenue for rail transportation moves across the RailAmerica system in the United States and Canada. Leslie is president-elect of the Furman Alumni Association Board of Directors. In November, **Laura Saunders Werner** completed the process to become a National Board-Certified Teacher of students with exceptional needs. She teaches English and special education at Panther Creek High School in Cary, N.C.

## 92

### THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

Rich and **Keely Burrell Remedios** live in Eden Prairie, Minn. Keely is an attorney and E-Discovery project manager with Kroll Ontrack. Rich is a professional actor and graphic designer.

**ADOPTION:** **Becky Haus**, a daughter, Madysen Jane O'Halloran-Haus, December 21. They live in Ormond Beach, Fla.

## 93

**Tradd Harter** and his staff at Classic City Orthodontics in Athens, Ga., received several awards at the 2012 SureSmile Conference, including the outstanding treatment coordinators and outstanding front desk operations awards, and an honorable mention for outstanding marketing coordination. The SureSmile program enables orthodontists to complete braces treatments in an average of 30 percent less time compared to traditional braces. Visit [www.classiccityorthodontics.com](http://www.classiccityorthodontics.com).

**Derek Waugh** has been named director of athletics at Dalton State College in Georgia. Dalton State is preparing to start an athletics program. Derek previously was men's basketball coach and then assistant athletic director at Stetson University.

## 94

**James Cotey** has been elected to membership in the Stites & Harbison law firm in Nashville, Tenn. He works with the firm's real estate and banking service group.

**BIRTH:** Brian and **Emily Thayer Crenshaw**, a daughter, Caroline Elizabeth, November 17. They live in Alpharetta, Ga.

## 95

**BIRTHS:** John and **Anne Wilson**

**Jordan**, a daughter, Molly Anne, March 11, 2011, Charlotte, N.C. Abbey and **Michael Kling**, a son, Landon Paul, November 23. They live in Perry Township, Ohio.

Charlie and **Sandi Padgett Riddle**, a son, Mason Theodore, October 25. They live in Goose Creek, S.C. Sandi is a freelance grant writer and Charlie is health and safety officer for St. Paul's Fire District.

## 96

**Elizabeth Suskind** has joined Unified Network for Organ Sharing as a site surveyor in evaluation and quality. Most recently she served as a registered nurse at Henrico Doctors Hospital in Richmond, Va. Now in his 10th year with the chemistry department at Northern Kentucky University, **Keith Walters** will become department chair in July.

## 97

### THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

**David D. Cross** has been named a partner in the Washington, D.C., office of Crowell & Moring law firm. His practice includes antitrust, intellectual property, health care, securities and general commercial litigation.

**Kelly Pew** (M.A.) has been named superintendent of the School District of Pickens County, S.C. She had been assistant superintendent of instructional services and had also served as the district's assistant superintendent of human resource services.

## 98

**Jack Hayes** has been named of counsel at Steptoe & Johnson LLP in Washington, D.C. He works with the law firm's international department.

**BIRTH:** Ian and **Margaret Meyer Stewart**, a son, Robert Grant, December 22, Atlanta.

## 99

**Elizabeth Herre Campbell** is now a partner in the Atlanta law office of Locke Lord LLP. She works in the firm's business litigation and arbitration, class actions and corporate insurance areas.

**Jon Kendall** has been promoted to partner in the Atlanta law office of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP. His practice focuses on healthcare mergers, acquisitions and regulation.

**BIRTHS:** Nelson and **Stephanie Cole**

**Long**, a daughter, Melody Elizabeth, March 16, 2011, Rutherfordton, N.C.

**Randy and Summer Dilgren**

**Teegardin**, a daughter, Juliet Pierce, February 20, Charleston, S.C.

Christopher and **Jennifer Walton**

**Whelan**, a son, Declan Christopher, December 27. They live in Laurel, Md. In January, Jennifer was promoted to senior attorney in the Office of Appellate Operations at the Social Security Administration.

## 00

**Des Kitchings** has joined the football staff at North Carolina State University as running backs coach. He spent 2011 as running backs coach at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He has also been an assistant at Vanderbilt and at Furman.

## NATURAL LEADER: CASTILE PUTS PEOPLE BEFORE PROCESS

FOR JOHN CASTILE '88, basketball paved the way for his future, and not just because it earned him a full scholarship to Furman. The sport put him in touch with people who supported and encouraged him — and now he's returning the favor as city manager of Greenville.

"When I look back, I can see how my high school basketball coach found a way to instill values in kids who may not have had value elsewhere," Castile says. That coach, George Glymph of Eau Claire High School in Columbia, S.C., inspired Castile and other players to achieve success beyond sports.

For Castile, that encouragement led to Furman, which he chose because it was close to home and because he wanted a small school with high academic standards. But upon arriving, he felt out of place. "I come from a very urban setting," he says. He considered leaving, until several professors approached him and told him he needed Furman — and Furman needed him.

"They wanted me to succeed," says Castile. "My world was broadened. It was growing and evolving." He now views his time at Furman as pivotal to his career success. "Without coming into contact with people that were different, my fear is I would not have been able or suited to be successful in the business world. Without them, I'm not sure I'd be doing what I'm doing now."

As city manager Castile is Greenville's chief executive officer, managing more than 800 employees and an annual operating budget in excess of \$136 million. He oversees the city's day-to-day operations, works closely with City Council, and has been a key part of many of the city's most lauded efforts, including the development of Fluor Field (the minor league baseball stadium), RiverPlace (a retail, restaurant and housing development) and the Kroc Center (a 20-acre recreational and cultural facility).

Castile cites RiverPlace as an example of the public-private partnerships that have become the hallmark of the city's revitalization over the last 25 years. "Here you see a \$70 million investment supported by a \$13 million public park, and it became the postcard for Greenville," he says.

But before building beautiful parks and grand hotels, he says that cities must have the less glamorous aspects of infrastructure in place, from wastewater collection and stormwater management to police and fire protection. "Private investors are looking to protect their investment, and the public sector is the place to start. We build communities, and our communities are judged by what the public infrastructure looks and feels like."

Greenville mayor Knox White calls Castile a natural leader and problem-solver. "He understands the city's mission and its priorities and motivates the whole organization to move in those directions," White says. "He always puts people and problem-solving ahead of red tape and process."

Castile says his athletic background taught him about leadership, teamwork and how to balance demands on his time. At Furman he was captain of the basketball team his junior and senior years and a unanimous All-Southern Conference selection in 1988, when he finished second in the voting for Player of the Year.

He originally planned to be a lawyer, but after completing his political science degree he realized law wasn't his passion. "I was intrigued by the public sector and



how much of an influence it has in everyday life," he says. He worked in several management positions before joining Greenville's recreation department in 1995. He became assistant to the city manager in 1999 and deputy city manager in 2003, and was promoted to city manager in 2010.

Grateful for the positive example of coaches, teachers and mentors, Castile considers it important to provide similar support to others. "My focus is on encouraging people to live life without regret and to challenge themselves," he says. "It's about developing people and giving them opportunities."

He says "synergy" has become a buzzword, but it really means empowering people to make decisions about how to do things better. "You have to create an environment where people are willing to put ideas out there," he says. "You can always build on those ideas."

At 45, Castile doesn't play basketball anymore, although he does enjoy watching March Madness and professional games on television. He coaches youth teams when his schedule permits and relishes the chance to teach kids the same lessons he learned and the philosophy he shares with his city employees. "It's not about wins or losses," he says. "It's about trying to achieve something greater as a team than what you can do yourself."

— LEIGH GAUTHIER SAVAGE

*The author, a 1994 graduate, is a freelance writer in Simpsonville, S.C.*

**BIRTHS:** Mark Saunders and **Alison Kraigsley**, a son, Owen Berkley Kraigsley Saunders, June 3, 2011, Bethesda, Md. Mark works in business development for an aerospace company, and Alison is a National Research Council Fellow at the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

**Andy** and **Melissa Platt**, a son, Josiah Charles, July 7, 2011, Nashville, Tenn. Andy is an account manager with Windstream Communications.

## 01

**Karen Guth** has accepted a position as assistant professor of theology at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minn. She spent the 2011–12 academic year as a postdoctoral fellow with the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Decatur, Ga.

**Ryan F. Smith** earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano performance from the University of South Carolina with a minor in music history. He was awarded the David G. Ellison Summer Research Fellowship for Southern Studies for research on his doctoral document, which examined Tony Buttitta's unpublished opera *Diggin' the Ring*, a spoof of Wagner's Ring Cycle that uses African-American songs of protest. Ryan lives in Columbia and performs throughout the Southeast. Visit his website, [www.ryanfsmith.com](http://www.ryanfsmith.com).

**BIRTHS:** Leander and **Gabrielle**

**Ferguson Cannick**, a daughter, Eva Victoria, January 24, Charleston, S.C. Wayne and **Kendra Johnson Dennis**, a son, Brandon Wesley, May 14, 2011. They live in Pelzer, S.C.

Paul and **Heather Lundell Dorrance**, a daughter, Carissa May, June 15, 2011, Columbus, Miss.

## 02

### THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

**Jessica Anderson** recently accepted a position as assistant dean for admissions at Indiana Tech Law School, which is scheduled

to open in the fall of 2013 in Fort Wayne.

She has been associate director of law admissions at Ohio Northern University.

**Jennifer Willis Girard** of Falls Church, Va., has been promoted to officer of knowledge management at the American Red Cross national headquarters.

**Laura Anthony Linz** of Chattanooga, Tenn., is major projects manager for the Association for Visual Arts and was director of April's Bridges Arts Festival™. She was previously executive director for two non-profit arts organizations and festival director for three major arts and crafts festivals.

**BIRTHS:** **Chris and Sarah Adams**

**Bainbridge**, a daughter, Catherine Paige, March 6, Asheville, N.C.

**Jonathan** and **Beth Ewing**, a daughter, Adelaide Lynn, October 17. They live in Williamsburg, Va. Jonathan was recently promoted to the rank of major in the U.S. Army and is studying for an MBA degree at the College of William & Mary. Tim and **Daiva Liktorius Grubb**, a daughter, Sophia Catherine, August 30. They live in Franklin, Tenn.

## 03

**Chad Bennett** has launched Populus Brands, a Los Angeles-based company that builds lifestyle brands, creates strategic sponsorships and promotional partnerships, and develops consumer products directly from content creators' television, digital and entertainment properties. Chad was formerly vice president for brand development for Reveille Productions. Visit [www.populusbrands.com](http://www.populusbrands.com).

**Angela Christian** of Mauldin, S.C., received the Strayer University Student Success Story Award. She has been inducted into Alpha Chi honor society and maintained a 4.0 grade-point average in the school's MBA management program. **Anthony Esquivel** has joined the Furman men's soccer program as an assistant coach. Anthony, who played soccer at Furman, was previously boys' director of coaching for the Dallas Texans Soccer Club.

**Andy Kidd**, who has been director of advancement with Episcopal School of Jacksonville (Fla.), has been named the school's director of athletics.

**BIRTHS:** Scott and **Rebekah Tribble**

**Crenshaw**, a son, Braden David, February 18. They live in Alpharetta, Ga. Rebekah earned a Master of Public Administration degree from Clemson University.

**William Jacob** and **Kelly Ramer**

**Moody**, a son, William Isaac, January 8, Tacoma, Wash.

**Brett** and **Merritt Squiers Shumate**, a son, Whitman Martin, October 19. They live in Arlington, Va.

## 04

**Robby Davis** of Spartanburg, S.C., recorded and released his first solo piano album, "A Love So Divine," in late 2011. He is now working on a second album and is a featured artist on Pandora Radio. Visit [www.robbydavis.me](http://www.robbydavis.me).

**Janna DeLoach Pennington** lives in Birmingham, Ala., where she is director of student leadership at Samford University.

**Nikki Pressley** is one of "10 California Artists You Need to Know in 2012" as selected by *California Home & Design* magazine. The publication asked a panel of the state's top curators to help compile the list. *Furman* magazine profiled Nikki, who lives in Los Angeles, in the Winter 2011 issue. Visit [www.nikkipressley.com](http://www.nikkipressley.com).

**MARRIAGES:** **Jamie Forsh** and **Eric Clapham**, September 10. They live in Spearfish, S.D. Eric is a professor of psychology at Black Hills State University, and Jamie is a physical therapist at the Regional Rehab Institute in Rapid City. Bill Cormier and **Shannon Norbet**, March 26, 2011. They live in Charlotte, N.C. Shannon is a physical therapist with Carolinas Healthcare System, and Bill is manager of personal training for Lifetime Fitness.

**Pate Slater** and **Faith Reimer**, July 30, 2011. They live in Orlando, Fla. Pate is a fleet manager for Starling.

**BIRTHS:** **Bobby** and **Tia Stevens**

**Holtzclaw**, a daughter, Zoe Elizabeth, September 6. They live in Anderson, S.C.

**Andrew '02** and **Piper Lanier Moritz**, a son, Parker Sorrell, July 22, 2011. They are living in New Orleans, La., while Andrew completes a fellowship in orthopedic sports medicine at the Ochsner Clinic Foundation.

## 05

**BIRTHS:** **Adam** and **Lindsay Skains**

**Eason**, a daughter, Emma Violet, December 9, Charlotte, N.C.

**Craig** and **Andrea Morgan**, a son, Cash Michael, December 17, Charlotte, N.C.

**John** and **Mivvi Strickland '06 Rust**, twin daughters, Carly Adair and Virginia Elaine, May 6, 2011, Vestavia Hills, Ala. Matthew and **Mary Hedges Stackpole**, a son, Tyler Paul, December 29. They live in Snellville, Ga.

## 06

**Ben** and **Sarah Zipperer Gaskins**

are faculty members at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, N.C. Ben teaches political science and Sarah teaches music. Both recently earned doctorates from Florida State University.

**William B. Henderson** is assistant dean of students at The SEED School, a public charter school in Washington, D.C.

**Sarah Horick**, a doctoral student in composition at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., was commissioned by the university to write "Lux infinita," a piece for chorus and orchestra that had its premiere at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception's 2011 Christmas Concert for Charity. The concert was broadcast internationally on the Eternal World Television Network. Sarah is also an adjunct professor of composition at Montgomery College. Visit [www.sarahhorick.com](http://www.sarahhorick.com).

**Morgen Young** of Portland, Ore., received the National Council on Public History's Award for Excellence in Consulting for her work on a permanent exhibit



## BROWN-NAGIN'S BOOK WINS TOP HONORS

**TOMIKO BROWN-NAGIN'S** acclaimed book *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long History of the Civil Rights Movement* is a recipient of two major honors, including the 2012 Bancroft Prize, one of the most distinguished academic awards in the field of history.

The Bancroft Prize, called by some the "Academy Award for historians," is awarded annually by the trustees of Columbia University and includes a \$10,000 award to the author. Recipients are judged on the scope, significance, depth of research, and richness of interpretation their work presents in the areas of American history and diplomacy.

The book also received the 2012 Liberty Legacy Foundation Award from the Organization of American Historians. The award is given annually for the best book by a historian on the civil rights struggle.

*Courage to Dissent* offers a new perspective on the civil rights era by highlighting the contributions of lesser-known agents of change and looking carefully at the important relationship between ordinary people and the law. It was one of three books recognized out of 175 nominees.



UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

Brown-Nagin, a 1992 *summa cum laude* graduate of Furman, has in recent years served as the Justice Thurgood Marshall Distinguished Research Professor of Law and Professor of History at the University of Virginia. This summer she joins the law faculty at Harvard University.

*Furman* magazine published a profile of Brown-Nagin in its Spring 2011 edition. Read it in the magazine archives section of [www.furman.edu/fumag](http://www.furman.edu/fumag).

at the Oregon Health & Science University detailing the history of diversity in the health sciences. Her consulting company, Alder LLC, provides expertise and assistance in such areas as historic preservation, research, writing and photography. Visit [www.alder-llc.com](http://www.alder-llc.com).

**MARRIAGES:** **Wendell Kimbrough** and Hahna Fridirici, February 11. Wendell is an independent singer and songwriter in Washington, D.C., and has produced two albums. His most recent, "Things That Can't Be Taught," is available free online at <http://noisetrade.com/wendellk>. Learn more at [www.facebook.com/wendellkmusic](http://www.facebook.com/wendellkmusic) or [www.wendellk.com](http://www.wendellk.com).

**Lisa Stowers** and Edward Rottmann, September 10. Edward is a financial analyst at Missile Defense Agency in Huntsville, Ala., and Lisa is a senior consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton supporting the NASA Competency Center.

**BIRTH:** **Tony and Dana Boltuch Saxon**, a son, Connor Anthony, December 3. Dana is finishing her Ph.D. in physics and astronomy at the University of Delaware. Tony works as a Linux administrator for TruePosition.

## 07

### THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

**Spence and Kayci Owen '10 Gibbs** live in Columbia, S.C. Spence completed dental school at the Medical University of South Carolina and is doing a general dentistry residency with the U.S. Army. Kayci teaches kindergarten in a magnet program in the Richland County School District.

**Alyson Krokosky** works as a genetics counselor at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Appleton, Wis.

**David Sibley** was ordained a priest December 10 by the Rt. Rev. Lawrence Provenzano, bishop of the Episcopal diocese of Long Island, N.Y. David serves as priest-in-charge of Saint John's Episcopal Church in the Fort Hamilton neighborhood of Brooklyn.

**Floyd Stanley** completed a Ph.D. in chemistry at the University of Cincinnati in December and accepted a research post-doctoral position at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

**Justin Stepp** has joined the football staff at Appalachian State University as running backs coach. He previously worked as a graduate assistant at Clemson University.

**Jessica Taylor** has been named a senior political analyst and reporter with the *Rothenberg Political Report* in Washington, D.C., providing analysis and reporting on congressional and presidential elections. She was previously editor of *National Journal's* House Race Hotline.

**MARRIAGES:** **Elizabeth Crockett** and David Saliba, June 11, 2011. Elizabeth is a youth and college director at First United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Ala., where David is executive minister. Ally Hock and **Case Cassedy '06**, October 8. They live in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

**BIRTH:** **Thomas Stephen and Laura Lane Benton Louie**, a daughter, Ann Carter Louie, November 9, Greenville.

## 08

**Andrew Jones** has established a T-shirt and apparel business called FLY-V. The company is partnered with VSNS Inc., a nonprofit organization based in Atlanta that works to promote wellness and empowerment among diverse populations. Andrew played football at Furman and designed T-shirts during his student days. Visit [www.FLY-V.com](http://www.FLY-V.com).

**Kathleen McDavid** graduated from the University of South Carolina School of Law in May 2011. She is now a staff attorney at the Supreme Court of South Carolina. Army captain **Aaron "Butch" Pucetas** is serving in Afghanistan at Forward Operating Base Airborne near Kabul. He is a first support officer and coordinates rotary wing air operations. He has been nominated for the Bronze Star for meritorious service.

**Michael Rafi** graduated from the University of Georgia School of Law in May 2011 and passed the Georgia Bar exam. He is an attorney at Troutman Sanders LLP in Atlanta.

**Molly Simons** has opened a Greenville business, Cake Notice, where she serves up custom-designed cakes and cupcakes. Visit [www.cakenotice.com](http://www.cakenotice.com).

**MARRIAGES:** **Rachel Lindsay Ball** and **Justin Donald Albright '06**, October 8. They live in Nashville, Tenn. Rachel is completing work on her master's degree at Vanderbilt University and is a client consultant for The Ingram Group. Justin graduated from the Owen Graduate School of Management at Vanderbilt and is a partner with Oak Point Properties.

**Anne Bean** and **Michael Spinelli**, March 12, 2011. They live in Baltimore, Md.  
**Emily Boehnlein** and **Benjamin Fulp** '07, February 12, 2011. They live in Holly Ridge, N.C.

**Virginia Hack** and Nathan Borghi, June 4, 2011. They live in Nashville, Tenn.

**Dustin Lane McCoy** and Jessica Lynn Simpler, December 10. Both are employed in Atlanta, she as a corporate recruiter for Brasfield & Gorrie and he as a senior accountant with PwC.

**Emily Poe** and **Jordan Crawford** '09, September 10. They live in Winston-Salem, N.C., where she is a self-employed calligrapher and he works at RayLen Vineyard & Winery. Both recently earned master's degrees from Wake Forest University.

## 09

**Justin Brown** has been named an assistant football coach at Mercer University. He previously worked at Presbyterian College.

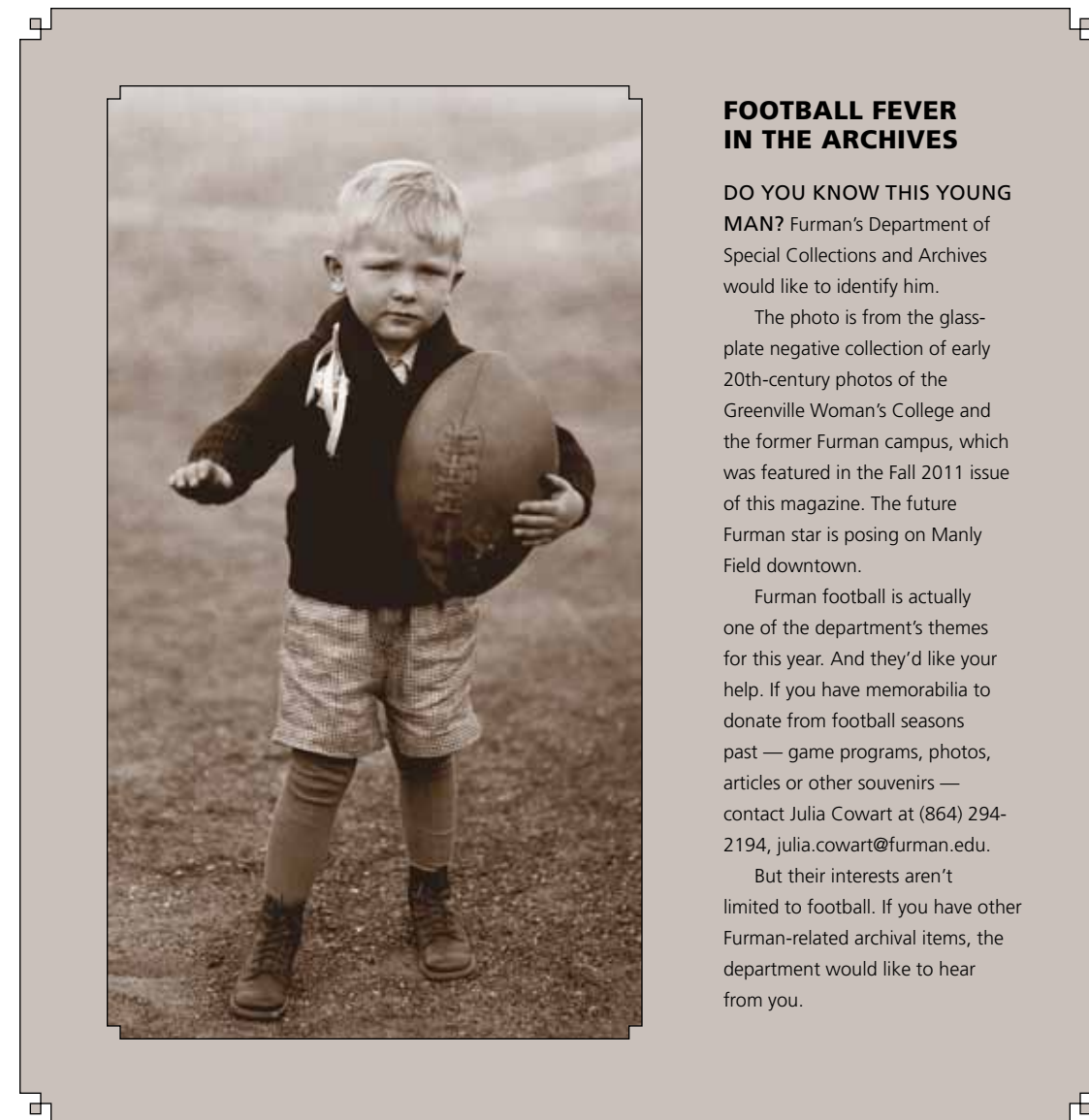
**Emily Robinson** has joined the staff of San Miguel Resource Center in Telluride, Colo., which offers support and resources for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. As cultural outreach coordinator, Emily assists Hispanic clients with personal advocacy, crisis counseling, education programs, interpretation and legal advocacy.

**MARRIAGES: Christina Bryant** and **Josh King**, December 17. They live in Waxahachie, Texas. Josh is pursuing a Ph.D. in political science at Baylor University. Christina is a campus minister at Southern Methodist University and will begin work toward a Ph.D. at Brite Divinity School this fall.

**Phillip Martin** and **Laura Abigail**

**Page** '10, October 22. They live in Lexington, Ky., where he is a communications specialist for Gray Construction.

**Meredith Gentry Owen** and **Paul Braxton Thomas** '11, August 13. They live in New Haven, Conn. Paul is studying organ performance at Yale University, and Meredith is studying speech pathology/vocal cord dysfunction at Southern Connecticut State.



## FOOTBALL FEVER IN THE ARCHIVES

**DO YOU KNOW THIS YOUNG MAN?** Furman's Department of Special Collections and Archives would like to identify him.

The photo is from the glass-plate negative collection of early 20th-century photos of the Greenville Woman's College and the former Furman campus, which was featured in the Fall 2011 issue of this magazine. The future Furman star is posing on Manly Field downtown.

Furman football is actually one of the department's themes for this year. And they'd like your help. If you have memorabilia to donate from football seasons past — game programs, photos, articles or other souvenirs — contact Julia Cowart at (864) 294-2194, [julia.cowart@furman.edu](mailto:julia.cowart@furman.edu).

But their interests aren't limited to football. If you have other Furman-related archival items, the department would like to hear from you.

**Alexandra Cline Snyder** and **Christopher McCurdy Towery** '07, December 17. They live in Greenville. Christopher is an attorney at Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice, and Alex is completing the cardiovascular perfusion program at the Medical University of South Carolina.

## 10

**Jeff Hennessy** and three friends biked from San Diego, Calif., to Charleston, S.C., this spring to raise money to support Batwa pygmies and orphans' education in war-torn Central Africa. Jeff recovered from a severe Achilles tendon injury to make the trip. He works as a naturalist at the Barrier Island Environmental Education Center on Johns Island, near Charleston. Visit [www.bikeforburundi.com](http://www.bikeforburundi.com).

**John "Trey" Massar III** has joined Crowell Weedon & Co., an independent, boutique, 80-year-old investment banking and advisory firm in Pasadena, Calif.

**MARRIAGE: Brian Highsmith** and **Emily Patterson**, January 7. They live in Washington, D.C. The video of a dance performed by Brian and his groomsmen at their reception went viral on YouTube ("Brian's Surprise Justin Bieber Dance")

and appeared on the Web pages of CBS News, the Huffington Post, the *Chicago Tribune*, MSN and the “Today Show,” among others. It even drew a “Thumbs Up” tweet and a re-post from Bieber himself. By the end of April the video had surpassed six million views.

**BIRTH:** **Chris ‘00** and **Megan Pinniger Colvin**, a son, David Euta, February 8. Chris is associate director of athletics at Furman.

## 11

**Zach Rosen** lives in San Francisco, Calif., and works in advertising and media sales with Cox Digital Solutions.

**MARRIAGE:** **Will Gray Beach** and **Kate Hovis ‘10**, December 17. They live in Mebane, N.C. He is in graduate school at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, and she teaches at Trinity Academy.

## DEATHS

**Mary Alice Hackett West ‘36**, January 10, Summerville, S.C. She was a teacher.

**Ravenel Boykin Curry, Jr. ‘37**, March 9, Greenwood, S.C. He was an officer in the U.S. Navy during World War II. After the war he returned to Greenwood and owned and operated Citizens Trust Company for many years. He was extremely active in the development of the city of Greenwood and served on many boards, including those of Mutual Savings & Loan, Self Memorial Hospital, Greenwood Heritage Foundation, Greenwood Genetic Center, Lander University and the Greenwood YMCA. He was twice inducted into the Greenwood County Hall of Fame and was a past president of the Greenwood Rotary Club, which named him its “Man of the Year.”

**Evelyn Putman Lewis ‘37**, March 4, Clemson, S.C.

**Sarah McSwain Gurley ‘40**, January 15, Greenville. She was an administrative assistant at Meyers Arnold department store and later an executive assistant to the headmaster of Christ Church Episcopal School. She also served as postmistress for Donaldson Air Force Base.

# Letters



## FRADY ENCOUNTER

I READ WITH GREAT INTEREST the article in the winter issue on Marshall Frady and the disposition of his papers. The article reminded me that I had crossed paths with him when I was the editor of the *Echo* in 1964–65.

He had written a wonderful letter to Dr. John Crabtree about a trip he made to visit Faulkner’s home place in Oxford, Miss. I contacted Frady about publishing it, with a little editing. He said OK, and I must say it was the best thing in the magazine. The *Echo* won an award for that year.

At any rate, I am wondering if anyone ever dug up that little piece of Frady’s *oeuvre* for safe keeping.

— STEPHANIE MALINOFF ROBBINS ‘65  
Edwardsville, Ill.



## MEMORIES REKINDLED

I JUST GOT THE WINTER MAGAZINE and wanted you to know how much I enjoyed it. You covered several of my old students and professor friends. I was a professor in the history department from 1960–66 and am now retired from the Auburn University history department.

I really liked the article on Ernie Harrill (“A Man of Grace and Style”). He was a very good friend, and you captured the real teacher and administrator that he was. I loved the article on Marshall Frady (“The Outtakes of a Literary Life”). What a student. So much talent, and one who marched to his own drummer. I remember several funny things he did as a student and am so glad to know that his papers have been bought by Emory. As the former archivist at Auburn, I can appreciate the collection of papers of such a great individual.

Your obits on my old friends Benny Reece and T.C. Smith reminded me of our good times at Furman. We had a great faculty in the decade of the 1960s.

You need to get someone to write an article about the “Preachers Privy” where the faculty all ate lunch every day. The faculty of the religion department usually held forth, especially Theron Price. He was the king. Dean Frank Bonner would come down when he wanted to find out what was going on at the university.

— ALLEN W. JONES  
Auburn, Ala.

## HARRILL’S INFLUENCE

THANK YOU VERY MUCH for your gracious tribute to Ernie Harrill in the winter issue. I have many fine memories of him, but one still makes me squirm when I recall it.

I was a rough, conservative segregationist from south Georgia when Furman announced plans to desegregate my freshman year. I immediately draped my Confederate battle flag outside my Poteat Hall window to protest. Dean Harrill tracked me down and called me out of class. It was the only time I ever saw him really angry.

Over the years, as a student and a graduate, my respect and affection for him continued to grow. He worked hard to do the right thing all the time, even when it did not matter to almost anyone else and often at considerable inconvenience to himself. What a wonderful man. He made so many of us better people.

When I first saw the magazine’s lead article on the value of a liberal education, I almost rolled my eyes. So many papers have been written on that topic over the years I doubted the author could say anything fresh, or even interesting. I read it anyway, and it was as fine an essay on the subject as I have ever seen. My commendations to Professor Benjamin Storey for his essay.

— ED BRIDGES ‘67  
Montgomery, Ala.



**Leila Ruth Crawford Davis** '41, January 1, Norcross, Ga. She was supervisor of dietary services at West Georgia College and manager of school lunch services at Montgomery County High School.

She was also a nursing home caseworker for the Department of Family and Children's Services from 1966 until her retirement in 1977. She was active in the Norcross Woman's Club and the Gwinnett Retired Teachers Association.

**Miriam Justice Hawkins** '41, December 20, Hendersonville, N.C.

**Virginia Gault Hendricks** '41, March 1, Fountain Inn, S.C. She was a teacher for more than 37 years, a charter member of the Alpha Delta Kappa teaching sorority, and the first volunteer for Meals on Wheels in Fountain Inn.

**Carolyn Carr Riddle** '41, January 6, Marietta, Ga.

**Mary Louise Francis Howard** '42, January 31, Greenville.

**William R. Pendergrass, Jr.** '42, February 15, Burlington, N.C. After graduation he joined the U.S. Army and served in the Pacific Theatre until the end of World War II. Upon his return he enrolled at the University of North Carolina and earned graduate degrees in botany. He then moved to Burlington to head the culture department of Carolina Biological Supply Company, where he remained for 45 years.

**Ray Cox Holliday** '43, January 3, Montgomery, Ala. He served in the Marine Corps during World War II and was retired from Duke Power, where he worked for 32 years.

**Arthur Land Snipes** '43, December 10, Greenville. As an ensign in the U.S. Navy he saw duty in the Pacific Theatre during World War II. He worked for Sands & Co. for 17 years before acquiring Lipscomb Russell Co. in 1964. He also worked for Shriners Hospital. He was active with the Greenville Sertoma Club, Salvation Army and United Ministries.

**Jean Combs Dodd** '44, October 11, Tyrone, Ga.

**Samuel Marvin Hunter, Jr.** '44, February 18, Sumter, S.C. At the outbreak of World War II he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. He was selected to be a flight instructor and achieved the rank of captain. When the war ended he returned to school and earned degrees in civil engineering, structural engineering and soil mechanics. He worked with J.E. Sirrinc Company in Greenville before joining the U.S. Corps of Engineers in Wilmington, N.C., in 1952. He taught soil mechanics and structural engineering at the University of South Carolina, and in 1958 he moved to Sumter to open an office for the practice of structural engineering soil mechanics. He was the structural designer for many buildings in the Carolinas, and he was named a lifetime member of the American Society of Civil Engineers. He also served as president of the Sumter YMCA.

**Fred Augustus Mauney, Jr.** '44, January 9, Shelby, N.C. A Baptist minister, he began his career in Anderson, S.C., where he also coached an American Legion baseball team to the state title. After earning a theology degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, he moved to North Carolina and served as senior pastor at five Southern Baptist churches. Fellow ministers twice elected him to the N.C. Baptist Convention's General Board, and he served as a trustee for the North Carolina Baptist Hospital. After retiring from full-time ministry in 1986 he filled a number of interim pastorates, including one at his childhood church in Paw Creek, N.C. His last full-time church was Elizabeth Baptist Church in Shelby, and he authored a history of the church titled *The Saints at Elizabeth: Their First 100 Years*.

**Mildred Brown Randall** '45, March 1, Myrtle Beach, S.C. After working with her family's fireworks distributorship in Charlotte, N.C., she went on to work for Cherry Motors in Cherryville, N.C., and at the Girl Scouts office in Charlotte.

**Harry Coggins** '47, February 14, Greenville. In 1942 he entered the U.S. Army Aviation Cadet Program. He was called to active duty in 1943 and saw combat with the 307th Bomb Group headquartered at Morotai. He completed 35 bombing missions in the Pacific and was awarded numerous medals, including the Air Force Medal with two oak leaf clusters. After the war he served in the U.S. Air Force Reserve until 1965, retiring with the rank of major. He worked for 46 years with the *Greenville News-Piedmont* as a carrier, correspondent, news editor, circulation manager and vice president of administrative services. He was president and chair of the board of the International Circulation Managers Association (ICMA), and for 10 consecutive years he was a faculty member and seminar leader of the American Press Institute. He also founded the ICMA Circulation Promotion Sales and Marketing Seminar Program. Active in the Lions Club, he was a strong supporter of alma mater through the Paladin Club and Quaternion. An avid sports fan, he was a founder of the Poinsettia Classic basketball tournament, long a holiday staple in Greenville, and co-founded the Greenville Touchdown Club.

**Barbara Lynn Simons** '47, January 28, Charlotte, N.C. She was a member of the Mint Museum where she volunteered countless hours of service. She was crowned Miss Dixie "Queen of the South," was an avid gardener and tennis player, and was an antique dealer specializing in old collectable tins.

**Ruth Thomas "Tommie" Smith Baldwin** '48, December 31, Ridgeland, S.C. She retired as a school teacher after 27 years. She was a member of Chi Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma and was active in community service.

**Martha Watson Bargo** '48, January 16, Marietta, Ga. She earned a master's degree in religious education from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a master's and doctorate in English literature from Georgia State University. She was dean of women at

Anderson (S.C.) College, then was a teacher and administrator at Cumberland (Ky.) College before taking a position as a professor of English at Kennesaw State University, where she worked for 22 years.

**Laura Tollison Mitchell** '48, December 8, Laurens, S.C. She earned a master's degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and for 25 years was a missionary in Brazil.

**Mary Alice "Maggi" Gribble Goller** '49, January 5, Greenville.

**William Lupo King** '49, November 28, Lisbon, Portugal. He received a Fulbright grant to study at the Sorbonne in Paris, then went on to earn a master's degree from Middlebury College in Vermont and a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina. He worked at the American Embassy in Paris and taught at Vassar College, College of Charleston, Furman and St. John's University in New York.

**Jesse Howard Tate** '49, December 20, Pawleys Island, S.C. He was a master sergeant in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II, where he served as a waist and tail gunner in a B-24 Liberator. After military service he attended dental school and then practiced in Greenville for 32 years.

**John Boger Little, Jr.** '50, December 4, Norwood, N.C. A U.S. Coast Guard veteran, he was a retired salesman with Collins & Aikman Corp. and Ozite Corporation in Illinois. He was also a member of the 1940 American Legion baseball team that won the Little World Series and played in the Shrine Bowl football game in the early 1940s.

**Caroline West McKinney** '50, January 27, Fountain Inn, S.C.

**Carey Hill Smith** '50, December 29, Savannah, Ga.

**Roy Steele Wilson** '50, December 29, Woodruff, S.C. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, serving as a radioman aboard a minesweeper in the Pacific. He retired from GMAC after 30 years as a supervisor and district sales manager, then

established and ran a new car warranty insurance business until 1989. He was active in the Spartanburg Downtown Rotary Club, was a youth baseball and basketball coach, and played textile league baseball and basketball for many years.

**Robert A. Lambert, Sr.** '51, December 26, Etowah, Tenn. He joined the Navy during World War II and served on the U.S.S. Balch. After his duty ended, he completed his senior year in high school before enrolling at Furman. He completed his undergraduate degree at Concord University in West Virginia, then began a career in teaching and coaching that took him to Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee. He was the first president of the Sequoyah Conference and was on the Etowah Recreation Board and the Etowah Senior Citizens Board of Directors.

**Lois Egner Bomar** '52, March 8, Central, S.C. She was a special education teacher for more than 30 years.

**Bruce M. Olive** '52, January 25, Greensboro, N.C. After completing college he joined the U.S. Navy and served in the Korean War as a frogman with the Underwater Demolition Team. He left active duty but remained in the Naval Reserve stationed in St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. He later moved to Greensboro and became physical education director and adult program secretary at Central YMCA. After that he was a salesman of construction and building materials and worked part time for Avis.

**Morgan W. Rodgers** '52, February 11, Lyman, S.C. Upon graduation from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, he served churches in four South Carolina towns.

**Robert Dean Smith** '53, January 23, Charlotte, N.C. After earning a master's degree in chemistry from Purdue University, he worked as a research/development chemist in the textile field and developed several U.S. patents. He was a technical sales consultant with Dexter Chemicals and Sybron Corporation and was honored several times as Salesman of the Year.



## TED ELLETT: AN ABUNDANT LIFE

### WARM. FRIENDLY.

Open-minded and open-hearted. Humble. Fun — and funny.

Baxter Wynn, a Furman trustee and a minister at Greenville's First Baptist Church,

used these words, and many others, to describe Ted Tidwell Ellett at her funeral January 27.

Ellett, who died January 24 at the age of 101, was a native of Quitman, Ga. After graduating from Hollins College and earning a master's degree from Columbia University, she was a teacher and administrator at Limestone College and at Furman in the late 1940s. During her years at Furman she met Joseph Carlyle Ellett, a renowned professor of economics, and they eventually married.

She soon left the staff but remained active in campus life. Many people who grew up in Greenville in the 1960s and '70s will remember her leadership in the popular Furman Day Camp program. In 1999 Furman awarded her

an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree for her contributions to the university and the community, and shortly thereafter she provided funding for the design and creation of 26 candle staffs for the Charles E. Daniel Chapel.

Ellett was devoted to First Baptist Church and was a tireless community activist. She chaired the Friends of the Library and was a charter member of the Greenville Woman's Club, a former president and board member of the Thursday Club, and a former board member of the YWCA, American Association of University Women and Metropolitan Arts Council.

Wynn said Ellett was "full of grace and acceptance for herself and for others. She showed us what a good and abundant life is meant to look like: a life full of peace, hope, love and joy."

She is survived by two sons and two grandchildren. Memorials: Ellett Economics Prize, Furman University, 3300 Poinsett Highway, Greenville, S.C. 29613, or First Baptist Church Faith Fund, 847 Cleveland Street, Greenville, S.C. 29601.

**Joseph Alton Ouzts, Sr.** '54, December 28, Ninety Six, S.C. He was a U.S. Air Force veteran of World War II and was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1952. His first pastorate was Jordan Street Baptist Church in Greenwood, S.C., after which he served churches in three other South Carolina towns. He then returned to Jordan Street where he remained for 18 years. He held several interim pastorates after retiring in 1985.

**William Thomas Whitmire** '55, February 2, Greenville. He was a retired school psychologist in New York and New Jersey and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

**Duward Eugene Yeargin** '55, December 19, Greenville. A gifted pianist, he was music director of North Fork Baptist Church for more than two decades. In the 1960s and '70s he led two gospel quartets, The Continentals and The Sierras.

**Nancy E. Abercrombie** '56, November 17, Simpsonville, S.C. She was an Army veteran and worked as a clerk/typist during the Korean War. She had retired from the Greenville County Department of Social Services.

**William Dudley Barrow, Jr.** '58, December 11, Cleveland, S.C. He was an airman first class in the Korean War and was in the Army Rangers and National Guard. He made a career in the insurance industry and was a past president of Greenville Life Underwriters Association.

**Jasper Ridgeway Martin** '58, February 23, Spartanburg, S.C. He was a teacher and counselor with the South Carolina Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. He was a member of the Masons, the Gideons and Woodmen of the World, which he served as state president and national representative.

**Richard Allison Gantt, Sr.** '59, January 1, Greenville, S.C. He earned his law degree from the University of South Carolina and was retired from Benefit Controls. He served in the U.S. Army, retiring as a colonel.

**Robert Paul Armstrong, Sr.**, M.A. '60, January 18, Irmo, S.C. Bob served in World War II before beginning his college studies. He went on to a 33-year career in education that included positions as principal of Macedonia High School in Moncks Corner, S.C., and of Honea Path (S.C.) High School. He worked to improve special education opportunities within South Carolina schools through community groups such as the Babcock Center and Easter Seals Society. He was a lifetime member of the Lions Club and volunteered with AARP, providing free tax preparation service to senior citizens.

**John Vernon Platt** '60, March 17, Columbia, S.C. In addition to earning degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Drew University, John did ministerial training through the North American Mission Board, the International Missions Board, White Oak Conference Center and Ridgecrest Conference Center. His 52 years in the ministry included pastorates throughout South Carolina. He was a director of missions in Lancaster and Columbia, a part-time chaplain with the S.C. Department of Corrections, and most recently was an associate pastor at Spring Valley Baptist Church in Columbia. He also led a host of local and international mission efforts. He served on the executive board of the S.C. Baptist Convention and on the Southern Baptist Convention Historical Commission, and he was a trustee of Connie Maxwell Children's Home and a member of the S.C. Baptist Historical Society. He served in the S.C. National Guard for five years and developed an annual golf tournament to benefit "Transport for Christ," a mission group for truck drivers.

**Sam Lloyd Sarvis, Sr.** '60, February 28, Loris, S.C. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps before continuing his academic career, graduating from Coker College where he had the distinction of being the first male to live on campus. After Coker he graduated from Furman and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, earning doctoral degrees in both theology and psychology. In addition to being pastor of a number of churches, he was a long-time chaplain at Loris Extended Care Facility and was a master mason. He was also an accomplished pilot and the owner of Sarvis Aviation.

**W. Woodrow Stewart** '60, January 9, Gainesville, Ga. He was former managing partner of the Stewart, Melvin and Frost law firm. A dedicated community volunteer, he served as president of the Gainesville Kiwanis Club, chair of the Gainesville Board of Education and chair of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce. He was also a director of the Gainesville State College

Foundation and the Northeast Georgia Health Systems board. He was a three-year veteran of the U.S. Army and received the Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service in Okinawa.

**Michael Bazel Sheppard** '61, February 12, Folly Beach, S.C. After receiving the Bradshaw-Feaster Award for General Excellence upon his graduation from Furman, he earned a law degree from Harvard University, where he was a member of the *Law Review*. He went on to be an intelligence officer in the U.S. Army and was awarded the Bronze Star for his service in Viet Nam. He retired from the Army with the rank of captain and worked for a time with the Department of Defense in Thailand. He was for 18 years a partner in the Washington, D.C., law firm of Leva, Hawes, Symington and Martin.

**William Lee Carter** '62, December 26, Greensboro, Ga. He was a U.S. Army veteran and was commissioned a second lieutenant with the 3rd Infantry Division, based in Germany. His civilian career began in Atlanta, first with Lockheed Martin and then with National Data Corporation. He returned to Lockheed Martin as a manager in the Information Technology Division before retiring in 1996. He was a volunteer at the First Call Pregnancy Center.

**Allan Montgomery Goodlett, Jr.** '62, January 7, Greenville. He was a retired school principal, a Mason and a former member of the Greenville Optomists Club.

**William Roy Hilley** '62, January 29, Edgewater, Md. He worked in the Washington, D.C., area most of his life as a graphic illustrator for various branches of the U.S. government. He was a U.S. Army veteran, having served in both the 82nd and 101st Airborne divisions.

**Betty Jean Poore** '63, January 26, Greenville.

**Jerry Davis "Bud" Wynn** '65, February 12, Greenville. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps and was a retired machinist with the Cline Company. He was an avid fisherman and chess player.

**James Melton Williams, Sr.** '66, March 5, Atlanta. He was a top sales manager for Duron Paint, a talented builder and a stand-out athlete. He coached many Little League teams and was a booster club leader.

**Raydee Earl Wyatt** '72, February 19, Mauldin, S.C. He worked in the textile industry, retiring in 2006 after 27 years with John D. Hollingsworth on Wheels, Inc. In retirement he became a member of the Mauldin Garden Club and was recognized by the Greenville County Council for his leadership in the "Daffodil Project."

**Peggy Jo Giles Soley** '77, January 21, Simpsonville, S.C. She lived for many years in Washington, D.C., where she was president of SWL, a government contractor. In 2002 she moved to Simpsonville, where she was employed by Edward Jones.

**Robert Elmo Greenwood, Jr.** '78, February 23, Travelers Rest, S.C. He was a retired master sergeant with the U.S. Air Force. He was also a retired professor, having taught at both Furman and North Greenville. He was a member of the American Legion and the National Rifle Association.

**Leslee Lomas Bates** '79, February 6, Columbia, S.C. During her student days she competed in the South Carolina Miss Universe pageant, where she was named Most Photogenic. She studied art at the University of London as well as in Italy and France. She was employed by BellSouth as an education representative and also worked in the human resources field.

**Mark Scarbrough** '80, January 11, Charleston, S.C. After earning his Furman degree he traveled the world for more than 10 years, playing music and working in national parks. After settling in Charleston he worked with Blackbaud before starting his own Web design company, Illumicom. He was voted Sertoman of the Year and was a member of Dragon Boat Charleston.

**Marie Katherine Tibshirany Burgess,** M.A. '82, February 27, Greenville. An avid advocate of outdoors education, she taught at North Greenville College, Clemson University and Greenville Technical College.

She received recognition for excellence in teaching, service to the Special Olympics and service to the Greenville Mental Retardation Board. She spent the latter years of her career as director of summer camps and conferences at Furman, and in retirement she taught in the university's Osher Lifelong Learning program. She was a Master Naturalist and studied to be a Master Gardener.

**Becca Hazel McGraw Peavy,** M.A. '84, December 23, Greenville. An elementary school teacher in Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, she retired in 1996 after 34 years in Greenville, 25 of them at Armstrong Elementary. She was named Teacher of the Year twice at Armstrong and was selected for inclusion in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*. She was a charter member of Alpha Delta Pi sorority and a member and past president of Delta Kappa Gamma honorary teachers' society. She was a past regent and secretary of the Daughters of the American Revolution and a member of United Daughters of the Confederacy, Real Great Great Granddaughters Club (UDC), Greenville Woman's Club, and Clan McKenzie in the Americas.

**Marion Willis Thompson,** M.A. '84, March 10, Greenville. He retired from the School District of Greenville County, having taught fourth grade at Mountain View Elementary School.

**Robert Harris Patton, Jr.** '85, January 3, Columbia, S.C. Bob served as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army in Germany for two years. After his military service, he worked in the financial aid offices at the University of South Carolina and Columbia International University.

**Jerry Lee Hampton,** M.A. '86, February 22, Conover, N.C. He began his teaching career at Flat Rock Junior High in Henderson County, N.C., then taught in Caldwell County and in several Catawba County schools, including Catawba Rosenwald Education Center. He retired in 2011 after teaching in exceptional children's programs for 26 years. He also enjoyed coaching wrestling, baseball and soccer.





SUZANNE CAMARATA

## WRENN FINDS RIGHT FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

**RICK WRENN** isn't trying to kill your dreams. He's just telling you that the future probably won't turn out the way you think it will when you're 19 years old — and that may not be a bad thing.

"How can anybody ever see that? It's impossible," Wrenn said at the Asheville (N.C.) Regional Airport as he prepared to fly his private jet to Atlanta to catch the Atlantic Coast Conference men's basketball tournament. "You just have to be opportunistic. You've been dealt a bunch of cards, and you just have to play the best hand you can. You trade two in, you get two more and you've got another opportunity. A lot of it is luck, but a lot of it is making the best of what you've got."

When Wrenn looked at his hand after graduating from Furman in 1974 with a degree in biology, he was surprised to see chemistry — specifically, magnesium sulfate. In its crystallized form  $MgSO_4$  becomes something much more familiar: Epsom salts, that jack-of-all-trades home remedy your mother recommended for most every kind of ache and pain. It also happened to be the product sold by Wrenn's wife's step-grandfather's company, Giles Chemical in Waynesville, N.C.

They asked him to join the family business in 1978, and the one-time Paladin defensive end soon found himself in Gulfport, Miss., in charge of building a plant. He went around that challenge as he would a slow-footed left tackle, and he never looked back.

Eventually Wrenn found himself in charge of Giles, and under his direction it grew to the point that when it merged with Premier Chemical (based in Philadelphia) in 2007, it became the North American leader in the

industry. "We are bricks and mortar. We make a lot. We right now are the largest Epsom salts producer in the United States," says Wrenn, who lives in Asheville.

Wrenn, president and chief operating officer of Premier (now Premier Magnesia), also operates a mine in Nevada and has branched into sodium sulfite, which is used in pulp and paper, detergents, starches and glass. Despite the recession and the collapse of the textile industry (which uses magnesium sulfate in processing), his companies are thriving — which doesn't surprise one of his former coaches one bit.

"How hard he worked, how hard he played, was a great predictor of how successful he was going to be in life because he was tenacious and he was tough and he was not going to give up. [He had] all of those great attributes we love to see in a football player," says Ken Pettus, Furman's associate athletic director for development who was on Art Baker's coaching staff in 1973.

And Wrenn has never forgotten his athletic roots. He and his wife, Ruth, raised three sons, and all, like their father, are fiercely loyal to their schools' teams. The oldest, Rick, played rugby at Furman before graduating in 2004. Guy graduated from Wake Forest a year later, and Jackson attends North Carolina State.

"It's so good to have that," Wrenn says with a soft Carolina drawl. "Most of my buddies now are old guys like me, and they come back to Furman because they want to come back. They've got pride in their school. What a great thing to instill, and that's what Furman did in me."

That same pride caused Wrenn to hurt when he saw Furman's football facilities, once the envy of the Southern Conference, grow more dated by the season as rivals Appalachian State, Georgia Southern, Wofford and Elon expanded and upgraded. He is convinced the Furman program was facing a competitive disadvantage, so when he heard about the plans for a \$12 million upgrade of the Paladin Stadium press box and football operations complex, he was quick to get involved. "I'm fortunate that I'm in a position that I can give back some, and that's what we're doing," Wrenn says.

"He's been one of the major guys that has stepped forward," says Pettus. "What I love about Rick more than anything is he wants to give back to the university that has taught him so many great life lessons."

Wrenn, who joins the Furman board of trustees this year, hopes his fellow football alumni feel the same. For him, it matters that future generations will have the special experience as a Paladin that he had.

"I was lucky, just damn lucky. I couldn't have ever gotten into Furman without the football to pull me on," he says. "I love that excitement. Furman had it for a while with football. They may have lost a little, but I can feel it's still there."

— RON WAGNER

*The author, a 1993 graduate, is a freelance writer in Hendersonville, N.C.*

# THE LAST WORD



## Remembering a legend: Furman Bisher

**THE FIRST TIME** I saw Furman Bisher was at the 1979 Masters golf tournament. I was a 26-year-old sportswriter working for the *Piedmont*, an afternoon newspaper in Greenville, and Bisher was a famous columnist with the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. He was there in the middle of the press room, smiling broadly and joking with fellow luminaries like Dan Jenkins of *Sports Illustrated* and Dave Anderson of *The New York Times*, and I wouldn't have felt much different if, five decades earlier and a continent away, I had spotted Ernest Hemingway in a Paris café.

Here was the man who, in addition to writing sterling prose that hundreds of thousands clamored to read every morning, had played golf with Bobby Jones, interviewed Shoeless Joe Jackson, given "Lord" Byron Nelson his nickname, traded good-natured barbs with Richard Petty, palled around with Bing Crosby, and even helped bring major league baseball to Atlanta. If you were a young sportswriter, there was a select group of writers who transcended the sports they covered, and Bisher was one of them.

Some 15 years later, I was working at Furman and, along with photographer Charlie Register, went to Bisher's home just outside of Atlanta to interview him for a *Furman Magazine* article. Even though he had graduated from the University of North Carolina, Bisher spent his first two years of college at Furman and remained a loyal alumnus, even to the point of establishing a generous athletic/academic scholarship at the university.

He talked about how he had always loved Furman and never wanted to leave, but had no choice once the school cut the journalism program prior to his junior year. He admitted that the name of the university influenced his decision to matriculate from his hometown of Denton, N.C., and that he had followed Furman's sports program from afar as a young boy. He used the term "we" when referring to the football team's victories over Clemson during his days at the university, and he said there were very few people in the world he idolized more than Bob King, an All-America football player at Furman who would go on to become football coach.

Bisher's considerable wit was also on full display that day. He reveled in the memories of all the pretty girls who came to the men's campus for classes, arriving in taxis like angelic visions, and he remembered how being assigned to live in McGee Hall, the athletic dorm, gave him special status, even though the building itself could best be described as a "slum."

Bisher died of a heart attack on March 18 at the age of 93. He left behind a million words that attested to his talent and a string of tributes by his fellow scribes that showed he was much more than a mere chronicler of the era's sporting events.

So we say goodbye to a University of North Carolina graduate who never forgot his time at Furman. It will be our pleasure to carry on the name.

— VINCE MOORE

*The writer is director of news and media relations at Furman.*

Furman University is committed to providing equal access to its educational programs, activities, and facilities to all otherwise qualified students without discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other category protected by applicable state or federal law. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer, Furman also affirms its commitment to nondiscrimination in its employment policies and practices. For information about the university's compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and the I.R.S. Anti-Bias Regulation, contact the Director of Human Resources, (864) 294-3015, 3300 Poinsett Hwy., Greenville, S.C. 29613. For information about Furman's compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act, contact the Disability Services Coordinator, (864) 294-2320, 3300 Poinsett Hwy., Greenville, S.C. 29613.



# Furman

Office of Marketing and Public Relations  
3300 Poinsett Highway  
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